The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LVII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 1929 NUMBER 739

Contents

The Week 282

Editorials

The Purpose of the Cruisers 285
The Monroe Doctrine's New Phase 286

General Articles

Can the Tariff Help the Farmer?..Robert Stewart 288
The Facts about Influenza.....Morris Fishbein 290
Voice in Winter (verse).....Raymond Holden 292
Two Crimes of 1928.....Jack Black 293
Washington Notes.....T. R. B. 295
Street Scene.....Stark Young 296
Magic, Black and White.....Robert Herrick 298
Solution (verse).....Harold Lewis Cook 299

Correspondence 300

Reviews of Books

Dostoyevsky Abroad.....Edmund Wilson 302
Picasso and Others.....Walter Pach 303
The Unbelievable Bennetts.....Edith H. Walton 304
The Front Sinister.....Clarence Britten 304
The Jew as He Is Not.....Walter F. Kohn 305
Red Dusk in Ireland.....William Troy 306

The Week

THE TERMS under which the Senate ratified the Kellogg Treaty require little comment. Mr. Kellogg and Senator Borah won a victory in that there was no technical reservation; but the report of the Foreign Relations Committee which was read and filed constituted a reservation in fact and will be so interpreted throughout the world. Its three points, that the Monroe Doctrine is not impaired, the right of self-defense remains and the United States is not bound by any European sanctions against an aggressor nation, were all needless; as we point out elsewhere in this issue, the statement about the Monroe Doctrine gives a much narrower and simpler view of it than the United States has taken at any time since the McKinley administration. The European powers can hardly complain of our reservation, which they had anticipated and which goes no further than their own. Latin America has no interest in the Kellogg Treaty but is much concerned for the new Pan-American treaties of arbitration and conciliation, and if we ratify the latter, our southern neighbors will probably accept the former. The Kellogg pact remains what it has been: the weakest international document ever promulgated, but one which may nevertheless as time passes prove to have great psychological value.

GOVERNOR ROOSEVELT and former Governor Smith have both made statements designed to cheer up the down-hearted Democrats and reconstitute their shattered ranks. Of Mr. Roosevelt's remarks, the one which will be longest remembered was the unfortunate observation that many of his thousands of Democratic correspondents believed the election last November had been stolen by the Republicans—an opinion which he should not have repeated so casually, and without any corroboration, even if some of the party members believe it. Governor Smith stressed the necessity for maintaining an aggressive fighting organization, not only during elections but between them. The party members in Congress ought, of course, to constitute the spearhead of such a body, though in recent years they have shown a sad incapacity for this task. Neither Roosevelt nor Smith mentioned the chief problem, the fact that the two wings of the Democracy have nothing whatever in common except their dislike of the Republicans and their desire to enjoy the spoils of office. No positive and dynamic leader can possibly hope to win the hearty allegiance of both wings; the most he can expect is a sullen and temporary acquiescence during the quadrennial campaigns, from the camp opposed to his own, an acquiescence which in 1928 was so feeble on the part of the Southern faction that the results were almost fatal. Between elections, the party as a national force simply ceases to exist. This intra-party sectional antagonism is based for the most part on matters which are not properly in the sphere of politics: it is an antipathy which can neither be explained nor resolved away. It is complicated, moreover, by the same division between progressives and conservatives that makes the Republican party such an artificial organism. The next great leader of the Democrats, in our opinion, will not be a master of compromise and expediency who will manage to get the two dissonant groups under the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

same circus tent; he will come from within one section or another, and will stand by the principles of that group. Under such leadership the party probably could not win an election for a long time to come; but it could offer a forceful and valuable Opposition, which the Democracy is not at present equipped to supply.

THE confirmation of the appointment of Roy O. West as Secretary of the Interior by the Senate in executive session is chiefly significant as an indication of the deep disunity of the Democratic party. It could not have been achieved by the recorded vote unless a number of Democratic Senators had voted with the regular Republicans on the issue. This they did in spite of the strong stand taken against the appointment during the campaign by Alfred E. Smith. The action was a slap in the face of the Democratic presidential candidate by members of his own party. Whether there were any reasons for the confirmation which might have influenced an impartial mind we cannot know, on account of the secrecy of the debate. All we do know is that there were excellent reasons against the confirmation, consisting of Mr. West's past association with utility interests, whose applications have to be passed upon by the Secretary of the Interior. Since a new Secretary will be appointed in March, the practical result of the Senate's action may not seriously prejudice the public interest, unless Mr. Hoover by some unaccountable error of judgment should choose to continue Mr. West in office. This is one more indication, however, that the Democratic party in Congress is not to be relied upon as a progressive force.

SECRETARY MELLON is under some embarrassment in seeking to explain why he doesn't want the extra $25,000,000 which the prohibitionists have sought to force upon him for more effective enforcement of the Volstead Law. In his letter to Bishop Cannon he explains that the $25,000,000 in question is earmarked for the Prohibition Bureau, and says that there are other governmental agencies which are also in need of funds—the Coast Guard, the customs service, the border patrol, and particularly, the Department of Justice, which must prosecute the cases in the courts and needs more judges to try the cases. But if this is the case, why did not Secretary Mellon ask for large additional sums for the agencies which are under the Treasury, and see to it that Attorney General Sargent did the same? How can he conscientiously abstain from asking Congress for enough money properly to enforce the law? The legislators would probably refuse to grant such a request, as they did when the wets tried a short time ago to increase the prohibition fund to $300,000,000; but that would be their responsibility and Mr. Mellon would not then, as he is obviously doing now, connive at a pretence at enforcement which generally is a very sorry joke.

THE bill introduced by Senator Bruce to enlarge the Tariff Commission to a membership of twelve to add a Public Relations Counsel whose duty it would be to represent the consumers in hearings and to repeal the "flexible" tariff provision by taking from the President the power to change duties and instead directing the Commission to report to Congress, has much to recommend it. The flexible tariff has not flexed much so far, and most of the bends have been upward. The present Commission has been weakened by political appointments. The work it has to do is too much for it. The consumer is not represented except when the consumer happens to be a well organized industrial interest. And Congress has undertaken general tariff revision without the benefit of impartial and expert advice. If we are to have revision by Congress, the situation would be much improved by the existence of a competent commission. The proposal, however, has flaws. There seems to be no good reason why the Commission should be strictly bi-partisan. Should not economic competence be the sole qualification? And no commission can help much except on the basis of a well considered tariff policy. The present Republican policy seems to be not only protection, but more and more protection. We fear that the Public Relations Counsel would find himself under the necessity of carrying on, single-handed, a running fight against all the rulers of the dominant party.

THE Hilton Young Commission has just published its report to the British Colonial Office concerning the future of British East Africa. The problem which it was called upon to solve is one of the most difficult within the British Commonwealth of Nations. Despite the depressing example of South Africa, the British government has encouraged the white settlement of the Kenya Highlands, and in the process conditions have come into existence which have worked economic and social injury to the native population. The Masai and Kikuyu have lost part of their lands to the white man's avarice; the native population as a whole is indirectly obliged to live in reserves which will soon be inadequate for their needs. Having become economicaly supreme, the Kenya settlers, under the intrepid leadership of Lord Delamere, are now demanding self-government, following which they ask the establishment of a new self-governing Dominion of East Africa, embracing Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia. The problem before the Hilton Young Commission is to what extent, if at all, this demand should be encouraged—that is, the demand of 25,000 Europeans in East Africa to rule not only themselves, but also 12,000,000 natives and about 50,000 Indians. To its credit the Commission rejects the contention that the government of East Africa should be turned over to the Britishers on the spot. It significantly states that "the territories of Eastern Africa taken as a whole can never

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be white men's countries." The interests of the natives must be placed first, and in the fulfillment of this trust, the people of England cannot delegate their responsibilities. The Commission also rejects the federation scheme, for the time being. Nevertheless, it believes that the interests of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda would be jointly advanced by a unified communications and native policy. The British government and world opinion should remember that the mandate of Tanganyika is under the supervision of the Mandates Commission at Geneva. Even if such incorporation takes place, the Mandates Commission will continue to be responsible for the welfare of the native inhabitants of the mandated territory, and if the recommendations of this report are put into effect, the Mandates Commission should see to it that the new system conforms to the highest League of Nations ideals.

MRS. MARY WARE DENNETT of New York City has been subjected to a federal indictment for sending through the mails a copy of her pamphlet, "The Sex Side of Life." The government alleges that the pamphlet in question is obscene. What Mrs. Dennett has written is a straightforward and simple account of the truth about sex, without any mawkish allegorical nonsense, calling the parts of the human body by their proper names, and omitting no important fact. To one who has read it, it is impossible to imagine that it could arouse improper passion or pander to depraved appetites; on the contrary, it ought to have a precisely opposite effect. The pamphlet has the endorsement of many leading physicians, social workers, ministers and others; it is on sale in the bookstores of leading educational institutions, with the approval of the faculty. We agree with Mrs. Dennett's attorney, Mr. Morris Ernst, that if what she has written is obscene, then life itself is obscene. If we cannot tell adolescent children this much, then every attempt at sex education might as well be abolished, and we should return to the old conspiracy of silence which has wrought such terrible harm upon so many millions of persons.

A SIGNIFICANT innovation in workers' education was the Railroad Labor Conference of the unions on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, held last week at Johns Hopkins University. Over two hundred delegates came at their own expense. The proceedings were broadcast for others who wanted to listen in. The conference chose to listen, not only to some of the unions' own officials and to economists closely identified with labor in sympathy such as Professor Sumner H. Slichter of Cornell, but to others working on employers' problems, like Professor W. J. Cunningham of Harvard. It heard public officials like Mr. Samuel Winslow, Chairman of the Board of Mediation under the Railroad Labor Act, Commissioner of Labor Statistics Ethelbert Stewart, and Interstate Commerce Commissioner Frank McManamy. One of the most valued addresses was that by President Daniel Willard of the Baltimore and Ohio. Among the subjects considered were the railroad rate problem, displacement of labor, stabilization of employment, problems of management, problems of collective bargaining, ways of increasing the share of workers in the product of industry and in its control. Naturally, the membership of the conference was presented with numerous and sometimes divergent points of view. It had to form its own opinions as to what to accept. This fair-minded performance was organized, by the way, by Mr. William Ross, a graduate of Brookwood Labor College, which was outlawed by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. because of an alleged purpose to indoctrinate Communism.

TWENTY years ago—on February 9, 1909, to be exact—President Roosevelt submitted to Congress the report of the Country Life Commission. It was this Commission which first aroused the nation to an awareness of its "rural problem." In his message to Congress President Roosevelt said: "I warn my countrymen that the great recent progress made in city life is not a full measure of our civilization; for our civilization rests at bottom on the wholesomeness, the attractiveness, and the completeness, as well as the prosperity, of life in the country. . . . But the disparity between city and country has continued to increase. The report of Roosevelt's Country Life Commission was generously commended in all quarters, but the agricultural problem is more acute in 1929 than it was twenty years ago. There is still no statesmanship adequate for this perplexing situation. The recent presidential campaign served to bring the nation's consciousness of the problem to higher levels. Legislative solutions are to be sought for some of the larger problems of prices, marketing, taxation. It is important to remember, however, that no matter how successful these efforts are, they cannot strike to the roots of the problem. Better organization of local farm communities which can make real the coöperative habit, increase the social values of rural life, and make use of improved techniques, will still be necessary. On this account it is a pity that there is so little support for experiments such as that recommended by Commissioner of Reclamation Elwood Mead, for a few planned settlements in the South. The intelligence of the farm organizations and of the new administration must be judged as much by their attitude toward this sort of experiment, as by their work on the more familiar types of "farm relief."

WE RECEIVE with mixed emotions the news that a committee of the Senate is about to investigate the plight of the American Indian. The problem is indeed a serious one, and whatever will serve to call public attention to it is so much gain; but what is needed is not investigation but action. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Institute of Government Research lately produced a monumental tome of more than eight hundred pages, giving the results of an exhaustive nation-wide survey of Indian affairs. It is now established beyond dispute that thousands of Indian children are being half-starved, over-worked and mis-educated, in the government boarding schools; that Indians' funds are being expended to build irrigation works, bridges, etc., which are of value chiefly to their white neighbors; that the legal relationship between the Indians and the Bureau at Washington works many injustices upon the former. What is needed at once is the voting of large emergency funds, to be spent primarily so that Indian children shall get enough food and decent living quarters. Thereafter, the whole problem of the Indian needs to be reconsidered from beginning to end.

The Purpose of the Cruisers

IF THE Senate passes the bill authorizing the construction of fifteen additional 10,000-ton cruisers and an aeroplane carrier, it will be adding many millions of dollars to the expenses of the government for the building of the ships, other millions on account of maintaining and manning them, and probably still more millions in the future for replacing them after a rapid obsolescence. It will be continuing the soaring curve of increase in armament in which this nation, as well as others, has indulged since the end of the "war to end war," one of whose chief beneficial results was to have been universal disarmament. If, in addition, the Senate amends the bill so as to require the construction within a definite time limit, it will be going further than President Coolidge himself has recommended, and will add to the provocation which the naval program furnishes to other nations. All this is a heavy responsibility to undertake. It requires strong positive justification. In a country anxious for peace and for the elimination of governmental waste, the burden of proof assuredly rests upon the advocates of the cruisers, rather than upon their opponents.

What proof of necessity is there? In the first place, it is said that since all the treaties and undertakings against war do not give us complete assurance that war will not come, we must as always be prepared for adequate defense. Defense against whom, and of what? There can be only one answer to the question as to whose naval power is great enough to warrant this addition. Our navy is already much stronger than that of any other nation than Great Britain. We could not, perhaps, conduct successful offensive naval operations against Japan in Asiatic waters, but surely we do not contemplate the possibility of that. And against what possible action of Great Britain would the cruisers be useful? Not against what she might do in a war with us. Assuming the absurd proposition that Great Britain would commit the folly of entering upon hostilities with the United States, the fifteen cruisers would be useless in active warfare undertaken against our shores, since they would fall an easy prey to attack from the air. There is no adequate protection against modern air squadrons, equipped to put whole centers of civilization out of business in a few moments with tons of high explosives and poison gas. No protection, that is, except doing the same thing to your enemy and thus making the suicide mutual. Anyone who thinks war is seriously to be expected is criminal to recommend merely the construction of a few cruisers on the plea that it would bring us nearer to that mythical vanishing-point, "parity." In such a case what we ought to do is to devote our whole national energy to making our forces immensely superior to those of the prospective enemy, especially our air forces, and then to strike first. No, the only conceivable use for the cruisers is to protect our merchant marine from such policing as might be attempted by Great Britain in a probably minor war between her and some power other than ourselves.

Assume that this is the object of our cruiser building. Great Britain, on the other hand, sees that the ships we think necessary to protect our own commerce might enable us to intercept hers. We build fifteen cruisers. She will build fifteen more cruisers. When Great Britain's limit is reached, there follow defensive alliances. We are started upon a naval competition to which there is no end, short of exhaustion of economic resources or world war. As the New Republic has many times pointed out, the effort of either nation to achieve parity as interpreted by itself, under such circumstances, is a snare and a delusion. It is foolish to suppose that either nation can finally achieve what it believes to be parity by building the ships it thinks necessary and then relying upon the other nation to cease building.

Probably the most persuasive argument for the cruiser bill is that it would make possible a limitation agreement between the two powers by giving us more with which to trade. This rests upon an over-simplified interpretation of what happened at the naval conferences of Washington and Geneva respectively (an interpretation which has been supported by the President himself). When we were superior in battleships, runs the argument, Great Britain agreed to limit battleships. But when we were inferior in cruisers, Great Britain blocked cruiser limitation. The way out is to match, or overmatch, her cruiser armament before we begin talking again. The only trouble with this logic is that its premises are false. We were as much to blame as Great Britain for the failure at Geneva. Our limitation program was rejected by her because it either would have given us, under certain circumstances, a superiority in fighting strength, or would have left her commerce without what she believed was adequate protection. To present Great Britain with an accomplished fact, to show her that we can do what she would not agree to our doing, is hardly to advance the solution of the basic difficulty. We

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

might, with different negotiators and better understanding, get an agreement this time where we failed last. But the construction of additional cruisers would do more to tempt the British to continue the competition than to bring an agreement. And the further the competition goes before an agreement comes, the larger is the armament with which both nations are likely to be permanently burdened.

There is one way to approach the limitation of cruisers which is so much better than any of the others that the others are scarcely worth talking about. That is to have a specific understanding with Great Britain as to how the cruisers of both nations are to be used in the various types of conceivable war. There is every likelihood that the government of Great Britain which will spring from the coming election will be in exactly the right frame of mind to negotiate such an agreement. There is no reason in the world why Mr. Hoover's administration could not attempt to negotiate such an agreement with it. It will need only a few short months to see whether the thing can be done or not. In the meantime, the lack of authorization for additional cruisers is not going to threaten the safety of the United States by one hair's breadth. In the meantime, no one in Great Britain is going to be under any misapprehension as to our power to build whole navies of cruisers if we want to. If an agreement can be made, we shall probably never have to authorize the fifteen cruisers at all.

Can it be that the hot haste to get the cruiser bill through, the slandering of everyone opposed to it, the marshaling of all the "patriots" who derive their sole distinction from the fact that their ancestors or relatives suffered in other wars, is due to a fear that if we do not get the cruisers this month, we shall never need them?

The Monroe Doctrine's New Phase

A FEW weeks ago a foreign gentleman came to our shores to give the inevitable series of lectures. As an opening gun he boldly declared that the Monroe Doctrine was a menace to world peace. Yet despite this conviction he frankly confessed he did not know what the Monroe Doctrine was. This logic is somewhat puzzling; and yet it typifies the intellectual uncertainty about this Doctrine which is coming to pervade a good many American as well as Latin souls. The New Republic is content to accept the conventional account of the origins of the Monroe Doctrine and to accord homage to its creator. We are ready to assume that had it not been for Mr. Monroe's pronouncement, the Holy Alliance would have re-swallowed Latin America and then stalked northward to devour the United States. We concede that as originally enunciated, the Monroe Doctrine was a territorial guarantee of Latin America, by the United States, against outside aggression. In other words, it was a small-sized Article 10—the progenitor of part of the present League Covenant.

Misgivings in regard to the Monroe Doctrine do not arise, however, out of this original interpretation. They arise out of the new bent given to the Doctrine by that great imperialist, Theodore Roosevelt. He argued that it was not just for Uncle Sam to keep Europe from jumping on Latin America's back and then allow Latin America to be naughty. When our little southern brothers did wrong we were under an obligation to spank them ourselves. Since then, it has been our policy to put down all revolution or disorder and prevent any confiscation which threatened to do damage not only to the interests of the United States but of Europe. In this wise have we become an international Sir Galahad. Whether we like it or not, the Monroe Doctrine has come to mean the "right" of the United States to police the western hemisphere—the "right" to wield the Big Stick for the supposed benefit of mankind.

This manifestation of Yankee philanthropy has not appealed to our Latin-American friends. They argue that the United States decides for itself whether or not they are living up to their obligations, and since the United States is a party to the dispute it usually judges these questions in its own favor. To them the Monroe Doctrine is no longer a territorial guarantee against outside aggression; it is an instrument justifying constant American meddling in their affairs. This feeling is not confined to irresponsible intellectuals; it has found expression through governmental mouthpieces and at international gatherings. At the Havana conference last January thirteen Latin-American states stood uncompromisingly for the doctrine of complete non-intervention; a few weeks later a League of Nations Commission was told that Argentina had never recognized the Monroe Doctrine; only last July little Costa Rica boldly asked the League Council what the Monroe Doctrine meant in connection with Article 21, and even today Argentina and Brazil have, out of animosity toward this doctrine, declined to adhere to the anti-war pact.

Although we may have winced under these attacks, we still pay allegiance to Monroeism. Mr. Hughes made long and metaphysical speeches about it in 1923, and again at Princeton in his lectures last spring. We have gone so far as to reserve from the scope of our new arbitration treaties with Europe all questions arising out of the Monroe Doctrine. The Senate loudly proclaimed its adherence to this doctrine in the anti-war pact debate. Thus we are going through the old ritual. Nevertheless, the New Republic believes that the meaning of the ceremony has changed. While, of course, they do not officially say so, the American people have learned several profound lessons from the Nicaraguan adventure, from the Havana debates and from the evident *rapprochement* between the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Latin-American states and the League of Nations. They have learned that Mr. Morrow's methods of conciliation are more effective in advancing their interests than a policy of marine squads and bombing planes. A new doctrine is seeping through to the American people which says that if conditions ever become such that intervention in the Caribbean area is necessary, it should be only by means of a coöperative effort of the American powers. It is significant that both Mr. Hughes and Mr. Kellogg, remembering our unhappy experience in Tacna-Arica, told the Pan-American Conference that the United States would not accept the burden of settling the Chaco dispute, but that this should be done through a *joint* commission.

This psychological undermining of Roosevelt's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine has been accompanied by several concrete acts of political importance. We have renounced war in the anti-war pact and we have promised to seek the settlement of disputes by pacific means. The Foreign Relations Committee last week made a report stating that the pact did not affect the Monroe Doctrine. It then proceeded to quote as "the true interpretation" of that Doctrine a statement by Professor Woolsey to the effect that when the Monroe Doctrine once "oversteps the principle of self-defense, reasonably interpreted, the right disappears and the policy is questionable because it then violates the rights of others." Here we have for the first time an official opinion that the Monroe Doctrine cannot go beyond the right of *reasonable* self-defense. No international tribunal would agree to the contention that the suppression of revolution in Latin America is reasonable self-defense on the part of the United States. The fear of European intervention, which we now use as a pretext for our interferences, has disappeared from the standpoint of practical international politics; any such intervention would be rigidly controlled by the Covenant and the anti-war pact. Whether consciously or not, the Senate Committee has turned its back upon the Roosevelt brand of Monroeism.

Taken alone, the Senate report might not be of fundamental significance. But it followed the signing of arbitration and conciliation agreements at the recent Pan-American arbitration conference, in which the United States in sweeping terms agreed to submit all of its disputes with Latin America, whether legal or non-legal, to an international forum. When once these treaties are in effect, it will no longer be true to say that the United States insists upon deciding for itself the extent of Latin America's obligations. Under the conciliation agreement it will be possible for a diplomatic committee, on its own initiative, to intervene in a dispute between the United States and Nicaragua, and the United States pledges itself to suspend hostilities until after the committee makes a recommendation. It will be technically possible to escape this jurisdiction by setting up a puppet government in a Caribbean country and inducing it to invite us to intervene. But if this is preceded by the landing of Marines and the disturbance of the peace, the diplomatic committee has the authority to act. This treaty, therefore, contains the germ of Pan-American control over the State Department's intervention policy.

Finally, there is the remarkable statement made by President-elect Hoover in a recent interview with President Iroygen of Argentina. In this statement he declared that "There are no young, independent, sovereign nations; there are no older and younger brothers on the American continent." They are all "friendly and equal states of a great continent. . . . The fear of some persons concerning supposed intervention ideas of the United States are unfounded." Although Mr. Hoover later denied that he had criticized President Coolidge's policies, he did not repudiate this interview. Other Presidents have talked about the equality of the American states and then have, in lawyer-like fashion, twisted their words to suit new ambitions. But Mr. Hoover is not a lawyer; he talks the language of the engineers. We believe he means what he says. We hope he will post this interview on every door of the State and Navy Departments in Washington and the windows of the Chicago Tribune and of all the others who misinterpret the real spirit of the American people.

The anti-war pact, the Senate report, the Washington arbitration and conciliation agreements, and Mr. Hoover's non-intervention statements are strands in a web which is being wound around the Monroe Doctrine as President Roosevelt interpreted it and is slowly choking it to death. Washington may cling to the Doctrine as some of us cling to the dogma of the infallibility of the pope. The form may remain, but the meaning has changed. For our part we should like to see a government at Washington honest and courageous enough to admit officially that the Doctrine has now lost its Rooseveltian character; for it is only by such an admission that the feeling of smug superiority and paternalism which has been created in the United States because of this Doctrine can be removed.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1929, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT
T. S. MATTHEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Can the Tariff Help the Farmer?

IN RECENT years there has been wide-spread agitation regarding the farmer's position in our economic system. This agitation has crystallized in Congress, during the past few sessions, into the proposal to regulate the price of farm products by the provisions of the McNary-Haugen Bill, which was twice vetoed by President Coolidge. This measure proposed to control the marketing of the surplus production of our six so-called basic farm commodities, namely, wheat, corn, swine, cotton, rice and tobacco, which are produced in quantities far above our home requirements. Although this measure failed to become a law, the agitation in connection with the proposal has crystallized the sentiment of the country to such an extent that some governmental action in connection with the farm surplus production is now certain in the immediate future. A determined effort will be made to placate the proponents of governmental action for farm relief by raising the tariff rates on farm products which are imported into this country.

It is important, therefore, to consider what effect the proposed tariff increase will have upon the solution of the farm problem. The value of the six basic farm commodities produced in the United States in 1926 was approximately five and one quarter billion dollars, which is 44 percent of the entire farm income for that year. Anything which would affect the price received by the farmer for these farm commodities would therefore materially affect the farm situation. What effect would even a prohibitive tariff have in helping to solve the problem created by the large surplus of these commodities which we produced in the United States? Let us analyze the situation which would be created by the adoption of such a proposal.

The wheat crop produced in the United States in 1926 was 831,000,000 bushels, having a farm value of slightly less than one billion dollars. During the year 13,250,000 bushels of wheat were imported into the United States, having a farm value of approximately $16,000,000. The wheat exported from the United States that year was 206,000,000 bushels. The wheat imports in 1926 were thus only 6.4 percent of our surplus wheat production. A prohibitive tariff which would retain our home markets for our own wheat producers would thus have little effect on the problem created by our enormous wheat surplus, as 93.6 percent of our surplus wheat would still have to be exported and sold at prices fixed by world conditions which would determine the price at which all of our wheat used for domestic purposes would be sold.

The problem is not one of actually getting rid of our surplus wheat—we have always been able to do that readily enough. Throughout our entire life as a nation, except in 1836, we have always produced more wheat than we consumed, and it has always been sold. Moreover, the wheat now imported into the United States is imported in spite of a tariff of forty-two cents per bushel, because the miller needs high-quality wheat to mix with our domestic poor-quality wheat for the production of better flour. The problem is one of trying to prevent the sale of this surplus wheat, at the foreign price level, from fixing the domestic price at such a low level for all our wheat. What the proponents of farm relief are trying to do is to get an American price for an American product on the same basis as that received by American labor and the American manufacturer.

The corn crop in 1926 was 2,750,000,000 bushels, having a farm value of $1,750,000,000. During the year the amount of corn imported into the United States was only 1,100,000 bushels, having a value of less than a million dollars. The corn exported from the United States was less than 20,000,000 bushels. The amount of corn imported was thus only 5 percent of our surplus production, and 95 percent of our surplus corn must still be marketed elsewhere under prices fixed by world conditions of labor and standards of living. There is even now a tariff of fifteen cents per bushel on corn imports, and the President has the power to increase this 50 percent whenever, in his judgment, conditions warrant it. A prohibitive tariff would thus have practically no effect on the situation regarding the disposition of our surplus corn production.

There were 52,000,000 hogs on the farms of the United States in 1926, having a farm value of $15.21 per hog. During the year we exported nearly 300,000,000 pounds of pork and imported only 14,500,000 pounds, which was only 5 percent of our surplus production of pork. In addition we exported large quantities of lard and other pork products for which there was no local market at home. For example, during the year ending July 1, 1927, we exported 700,000,000 pounds of lard. Higher tariff rates on pork and pork products would thus have little effect on the elimination of the problem created by our vast quantities of pork and pork products.

The cotton crop in 1926 was about 18,000,000 bales, having a farm value of slightly less than $1,000,000,000. We exported 65 percent of this or 11,250,000 bales. During the year we imported 420,000 bales, having a value of $37,000,000: a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prohibitive tariff might have kept this amount of cotton out of the country and thus retained the home market to that extent. But this would have very little appreciable effect upon the surplus in the United States. The cotton imported into the United States amounts to only 3 percent of our surplus, and there would thus still be about 62 percent of our entire crop, or 97 percent of our present surplus, to be exported. Even a prohibitive tariff on cotton imports into this country, therefore, would not help in any material way in solving the problem of the disposition of the surplus cotton production of our Southern states.

The rice crop of the United States in 1926 was approximately 42,000,000 bushels, having a farm value of $46,000,000. During the year we imported 2,500,000 bushels of rice, having a farm value of $2,750,000. Our surplus production of rice for export was 17,500,000 bushels. The imports of rice amount to only 13 percent of our surplus production. Again, a prohibitive tariff which would retain our entire home market for our exclusive use would still leave 42 percent of our entire rice crop, or 90 percent of our surplus, for export. This rice must still be marketed in competition with that produced in China and Japan where cheap living conditions and cheap labor prevail.

The tobacco crop of the United States in 1926 was 1,250,000,000 pounds, having a farm value of $236,000,000. The imports of tobacco into the United States that year amounted to 91,000,000 pounds, having a farm value of $16,500,000, while the exported surplus amounted to 516,000,000 pounds. A prohibitive tariff would thus have little effect on absorbing our surplus tobacco production. It might retain the home market for the exclusive use of our tobacco growers, which would absorb 18 percent of our surplus production, but there would still remain 82 percent of our present surplus of tobacco which must be marketed in the world markets outside of the United States.

The value of the exports of these six basic farm commodities is $1,069,000,000, while the value of the imports of these same commodities is only $150,000,000. The retention of our home markets for the exclusive use of our own farmers who produce these commodities would therefore take care of only 14 percent of our present exportable surplus. The problem of the farm surplus would not be affected in the least by an increase in the tariff rates on these products, as 86 percent of the value of our present surplus of these commodities would still be sold in the markets of the world in competition with that produced elsewhere, and even a prohibitive tariff on these products would not bring to the American farmer an American price for his farm products. Yet, the annual income from these six basic commodities amounts to $5,250,000,000, which is approximately 44 percent of the total income of all farmers in the country.

The agitation regarding the necessity for governmental action on farm relief during the past few years has been carried on by the several groups of farm organizations and farm leaders who are vitally concerned with the production of these farm commodities. Will they be content with general tariff legislation which, while it will affect these commodities very little, may affect materially the other types of farm produce which so far have played little part in the clamor for government action?

Undoubtedly it will be a Roman holiday, during the special session of Congress, for all those farm groups who seek an increased tariff on their special farm commodity. This may have a far-reaching effect on the particular group as regards their profits, but it will have little effect on the general farm situation, as already indicated.

Olives can be produced in Arizona and California equally as well as in Spain or Italy. Yet in 1926 we imported 6,000,000 gallons of olives and 138,000,000 pounds of olive oil. A higher tariff rate on these commodities from Spain and Italy would bring prosperity to the olive producers of California and Arizona, but as olives are an exceedingly unimportant crop this would not affect the general farm situation at all. In like manner the producers of such commodities as nuts—almonds, filberts, peanuts, walnuts, and the producers of lemons, oranges, grapefruit, peaches, may benefit by higher tariff rates on these products. A high tariff on bananas may force consumers to eat more of our domestic fruit of various kinds, such as peaches, but while this might possibly be very profitable to the peach grower, it would not affect the general farm situation materially, if at all.

Our imports of wool and mohair in 1926 equaled $125,000,000, while our exports were negligible and amounted to only $146,000. Our sheepmen are now entering upon the ninth continuous year of prosperity: they don't need higher tariff rates. There is apparently an excellent opportunity for many farmers to adjust their production so as to produce more wool and thus participate in the prosperity now enjoyed by the wool grower. It undoubtedly would be highly profitable for many small farmers to maintain small flocks of sheep and goats on their farms, but this is a question of management and not one of tariff legislation.

The amount of sugar, molasses and syrups imported into the United States in 1926 was valued at $232,000,000. Cane sugar can be obtained from the sugar beet, and corn sugar from corn. Sugar beets can be produced in the United States, but sugar beet production in the country is limited by the white fly, which causes curly leaf disease of the beet and resultant crop failure. There is no known cure for the disease. The increased production of sugar from the sugar beet in the United

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

States is a problem for the entomologist and not one of tariff legislation. The sugar produced from corn is not so sweet as that produced from the cane or sugar beet. Its wider use is dependent upon the industrial chemist and the commercial advertising writer and not upon tariff legislation.

The retention at home of the money now spent abroad for wool, mohair and sugar would materially affect the farm situation. But the solution of this problem is not one of tariff legislation. It is an economic one, dependent upon management which will provide for proper adjustments of farm production and the application of science to the solution of the problems pertaining to the economic production of these commodities in America.

It should be quite clear that the farm problem will receive little real help from tariff legislation proposed by Congress. The farm situation will be materially influenced by efficient management and the application of science to farm problems and by the industrial chemist in developing new uses for farm products.

ROBERT STEWART.

The Facts about Influenza

THE PRESENT epidemic of influenza apparently began on the Pacific Coast as far back as April, 1928. At that time the U. S. S. "Idaho" had an outbreak of influenza among its crew while lying in San Francisco, and it was the belief of the ship's officers that the men had acquired the disease while ashore on liberty parties. Cases began to be reported in considerable numbers from the Pacific Coast early in September, and in the early part of November there were 4,800 cases in the entire country. However, the figure must not be taken too seriously, since the disease frequently is so mild in its manifestations that the cases are not reported, and estimates of public health officials indicate that anywhere from 80 to 90 percent of the cases that occur are never recorded in any manner.

In September, 1928, Drs. E. F. Hirsch and E. R. LeCount of Chicago reported the results of a post-mortem examination that they had made on a man who had died in a Chicago hospital. They found that his lungs were in a condition typical of the influenza that occurred in the great epidemic of 1918, and they said in their report that this case might be a forerunner of a serious outbreak involving the entire country. That the prediction was well warranted is now apparent to everyone.

The disease progressed steadily from the West to the East, and at this very moment thousands and thousands of cases are occurring in Washington, New York, Boston and other eastern communities which in September, and indeed, even up to the middle of December, had not been seriously disturbed by the disease.

Epidemics of diseases affecting the nose, throat and lungs have been recorded under the name "influenza" for many years. One outbreak which is fully described occurred in France in 1769, and another as far back as 1737. Epidemiologists are now generally agreed that the influenza epidemics which occurred in 1847 and in 1889 were essentially the same as that which developed in 1918. In these epidemics the persons afflicted were suddenly seized with mild fever, headache, pain in the back and in the legs. There was some nasal discharge and a remarkable degree of prostration, out of all proportion to the general severity of the other symptoms. The person who has the disease seems to be especially liable to secondary bronchitis and pneumonia.

In the 1918 epidemic, the secondary pneumonia was frequent and severe, so that the terrific mortality was due to this cause. Nothing like the number of deaths from pneumonia occurred in proportion in the epidemic of 1889-1890, and in the present epidemic, again, the symptoms are mild and the secondary pneumonia infrequent.

In a survey of influenza epidemics which swept the world, Professor E. O. Jordan has considered particularly those of 1802-1803, 1805-1806, 1830-1833, 1836-1837, 1847-1848, 1889-1890. It is obvious that these epidemics recurred in definite cycles of from twenty-five to thirty years, with small epidemics occurring between the cycles. From 20 to 50 percent of the population were attacked in all of the major epidemics. Apparently from the history of the disease it is safe to predict another major epidemic about 1950.

Thus far it has not been possible to establish a definite organism as the invariable cause of influenza, nor to trace any relationship of the disease to weather conditions or to any other of the common factors of life and human environment. When the epidemic begins, it sweeps the world from the tropics to the North and South Poles.

The nature of the disease is such that it is differentiated only with great difficulty from the ordinary common cold and from other infections of the breathing tract. During the great epidemic of 1847, Mrs. Thomas Carlyle, wife of the philosopher, carefully recorded all of her ailments in her diary and there made this safe observation: "Medical men all over the world have entered into a tacit agreement to call all sorts of ailments people are liable to have, in cold weather, by the same

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

name; so that one sort of treatment may serve for all, and their practice be greatly simplified."

For influenza, the incubation period, namely, the interval between the time when the germ arrives in the body and the symptoms begin, is very short, approximately twenty-four to forty-eight hours. The first symptoms include chills and fever, sometimes nosebleed, not infrequently rapidity of the pulse and rather severe prostration. In this disease extreme sore throat is unusual, which differentiates it from septic sore throat and ordinary tonsilitis. By the second to the fourth day the disease becomes more severe, but thereafter, if it follows the usual course, the symptoms lessen and the patient begins to get better. Pains in the muscles and in the back, headache, and a slight cough not infrequently develop, and there may be disturbances of the bowels of various types. Secondary complications may affect the ear, nose and throat, and in children, particularly, infections of the ear are a serious complication.

If pneumonia supervenes, the danger must be recognized. Not infrequently the pneumonia is complicated by inflammation of the lining of the chest wall, with the formation of fluid or of infectious matter. Indeed, the story of the difficulties of the King of England resembles closely just such a sequence of events.

When a person has measles or scarlet fever, he usually develops in his body anti-substances against these diseases, so that he is unlikely to develop a second attack. On the other hand, the human body does not develop an immunity to most of the respiratory diseases, and it is possible to have pneumonia, coughs, colds and influenza again and again. Because of this fact it is argued that the amount of exposure to the disease, the number of germs received, and the virulence of these germs are exceedingly important in determining how many people are going to be attacked by the disease. The other factor of importance is the individual resistance of the patient to disease in general. It seems to be rather well established that a person who is in good physical condition, whose bowels are active, who has had sufficient sleep and a sufficient amount of outdoor air, is more likely to avoid infections of the respiratory tract than one who is run-down, and is likely to get almost any disease that may be spreading in the community.

As is usually the case, modern advertisers have not hesitated to avail themselves of the public fear of the epidemic to exploit their nostrums for prevention and cure. The pages of the newspapers are full of the claims of mouth washes, throat sprays, irritant ointments, soaps, oranges, mineral waters, laxatives and cathartics, and of similar preparations, all of which are said to have special virtue in controlling the disease. Makers of aspirin urge that merely going to bed and taking aspirin will prevent influenza. With the use of radio in exploitation of nostrums, the air has become the outlet for remedies which cannot even find space in a somewhat venal press. Finally, physicians are besieged with the claims made for vaccines and serums and for biologic preparations which the patient cannot take himself, but must have inoculated into him by some medical practitioner. The actual facts of the matter are that scientific evidence is not available to support the claims of any of these preparations, whereas there is a great deal of good evidence that they do not have the powers accredited to them by their promoters.

Epidemiologists are convinced that the disease is probably spread by coughing, sneezing, or spitting, and that in occasional instances it is transmitted through direct contact by the hands. The effects of crowding and close association on the spread of influenza are therefore of the greatest importance, and lead to the warning in times of epidemic to remain away from crowds. Unfortunately, under modern conditions of civilization, it is impossible for any human being to avoid contact with others for any considerable period of time. The importance of this factor is emphasized by Professor Jordan in the following statement:

> It is quite safe to assert that perfect isolation of an individual or group during an influenza epidemic constitutes a complete protection against the disease. Indeed, it is possible to go further and to maintain that where, as in most cases, it is not practicable to avoid outside human contact altogether, reduction of such contact to a necessary minimum confers some degree of protection, although naturally this is never absolute. It is clear that a number of factors, some of them unknown, enter into the causation of epidemic influenza, but the evidence seems convincing that on the one side, seclusion and detachment and on the other general mingling with others, especially if the mingling involves close personal association at meals or in working quarters, are very important determining influences.

This brings up the question of closing the schools. The closing of schools to prevent the spread of infection has been out of favor with sanitarians for some time. An opportunity is afforded in school for systematic inspection and supervision and makes the school ordinarily a safer place for the average child than the unsupervised playground or the street. Authorities on school hygiene are generally agreed that, unless under special circumstances, the schools should remain open even in an influenza epidemic. The evidence accumulated during 1918 indicated that there was no convincing proof that the closing of schools had any effect on the spread of the disease. This naturally would apply also to the closing of theaters, churches, moving picture shows and similar places in which a number of persons assemble. In large communities little if anything is to be gained by closing such places, and in small towns and in rural districts general group contacts are not numerous anyway. In such cases,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

people may be told of the danger and will probably avoid such gatherings.

The only possible scientific advice relative to the care of the disease is essentially simple, since there are no specific measures and since the condition must be handled as the various symptoms develop. The person who is sick should go to bed immediately and should have the attention of a competent physician. It is probably well that he be more or less isolated in the home, that measures be taken to provide that he does not spread the disease by coughing and sneezing, and that he does not use the same towels, napkins, drinking cups and eating utensils as other members of the family. Certainly the sick person should not be permitted to fondle or play with the children. If the patient is a young child, other children should not be admitted to the room, and the mother or nurse should take precautions not to spread the disease from the child to other persons.

Since the patient is likely to have a chill or to feel chilly, warm drinks, such as hot tea or lemonade or orangeade are comforting and support his strength. Hot water bags at the feet are helpful. The patient is not likely to express much hunger or appetite during the first twenty-four hours of the disease, and he should not be forced to take food, but he should, however, have plenty of water. After the severe symptoms have subsided, he should be given ample food, to restore his strength, since the disease produces prostration. The patient should be kept warm, but a sufficient amount of fresh air and sunlight should be permitted to enter the room. It is important that the physician watch closely for the development of symptoms of pneumonia, the most serious of the secondary complications. It is also important that the patient does not attempt to get up too soon, since undue exposure in the weakened condition lowers resistance and makes secondary complications likely.

There are many unsolved questions in relation to influenza which are not likely to be answered in the present epidemic, but which may be in the future. The epidemic strikes so suddenly that epidemiologists and laboratory research workers are usually caught unprepared for the detailed studies that are necessary. Perhaps before the next great pandemic, adequate preparations will have been made for intensive studies during the height of epidemic virulence.

There is an abundant amount of experimental evidence to indicate that bacteria change in their virulence and activity, just as human beings and other living organisms have greater or lesser strength at various times. It is argued that the pandemic type of influenza represents the activity of a different organism than that responsible for the sporadic epidemics which have occurred from time to time between great pandemics. Since none of the organisms concerned has been isolated with certainty, it has not been possible to show that the germ responsible for the pandemic is carried about and propagated by human carriers between epidemics.

It is known that other infectious diseases also undergo varying periods of virulence. Thus diphtheria in some years is highly virulent and at other times of a milder type; the same is true of scarlet fever and of Asiatic cholera. It seems possible that the organism responsible for pandemics of influenza and those responsible for the milder epidemics, as in the past year, may be of a related family, springing from a single stock, as is claimed by some evolutionists for man and the monkey.

As a result of his consideration of all of the evidence, Professor Jordan, who made a detailed study of the facts available during the 1918 pandemic, under a grant by the American Medical Association, is convinced that it is the virus of influenza that undergoes changes from year to year and that it is the periodic increase in its virulence at periods of approximately thirty years that brings about the recurring cycles of pandemic influenza. He believes that each strain of influenza breeds more or less true, but that it is also capable of more or less transformation, some strains becoming less virulent, and some more, according to the bodies with which they come in contact. These are great problems to which research investigators will give their attention during the coming years. Perhaps the accumulating population of the world, and changes in habits of living, have had much to do with the spread of the respiratory diseases. The great warfare between mankind and microbial infection goes on constantly. The germs, being living organisms, are continually affected by their environment, as are human beings. Hence, with these two variables, the problem of the protection of mankind against this particular enemy will always be a matter of vital importance.

MORRIS FISHBEIN, M. D.

Voice in Winter

Over the frozen field your simple word
Runs, yellower than corn, softer than rye;
Though the cold air prohibits every bird
Your breath comes flying, warmly, tenderly.
Bright ore, closed ingot of the body, tragic
And dark, stamped between polished discs of cold
And loosed by anguishes, your voice is gold,
It is a fortune, fabulous and magic.
Rich with this money, from the frozen brooks
I purchase water, from the bitter wind
Warmth for the working body, from the thinned
Stubble of buckwheat and the frosted stooks
Food for this hunger, from the cold cloud dew,
From the hard furrow crocuses for you.

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Two Crimes of 1928

Reviewed by An Expert

A "CERTAIN PARTY" once asked the late Arnold Rothstein how he managed to hold down New York City year after year and get away with murder.

"I use logic," Rothstein replied. "Mint-logic."

After wading through acres of newsprint about his killing and its various incidental aspects, it is easy to believe that there was more truth than wise-cracking in his remark. Assuming that mint-logic was the keynote of his life and the cornerstone of his success, why did it fail him in the end and send him off to such a shabby curtain, gut-shot like a Piute Indian? Plainly because he got up against somebody who was not sensitive to his favorite brand of logic.

Now that justice is about to be "done" and the matter of his shooting is well on its way to the circumlocution office where it will rest as another unsolved murder, it might be pertinent to give the whole thing a thorough dehoking. The hurried and harried reporter whose city editor barks "Gimme a column on the Rothstein case" tears into his typewriter, trades truth for time, and in twenty minutes turns in a story about as accurate as the verdict of a set of "free if you guess it" scales in the subway. One day he declares that the killing was an act of crook vengeance, one of those private, personal, intimate executions by which the underworld exercises snitch-control. The next day he hangs it on one of the many drug-crazed addicts whose nickels and dimes swelled the Rothstein bankroll. Then, in turn, he shifts it to kidnapping gangsters, paid killers, disgruntled poker players, and winds up with a timid reference to the gambler who is now under indictment, lock and key.

Rothstein was not killed, in my opinion, by any such people, or for any such reasons. If he had been a stool pigeon, he would have been dealt with in a surer way. The underworld doesn't shoot a snitch only once and in the belly. That gives him a week in which to die, and to broadcast the whys and wherefores of his "pay-off." He is the rattlesnake of the underworld and is never left to squirm and wriggle. He always gets "lead enough to last" and is so punctured that his skin won't hold spaghetti.

Drug addicts do not kill anybody, for anything. With due deference to fiction writers and anti-narcotic lecturers, I submit that an inspection of the police blotters and prison registers will prove this. They don't carry guns and they are not given to violence. Dope takes the heart out of them. Here and there is a rare exception; but as a rule they brag and bluster and whine, but they don't shoot, and I doubt if there is a brace of confirmed dope fiends waiting trial for murder today in the state of New York.

Rothstein's shooting was not a premeditated, programmed affair; nor was it the work of the gunman, the gangster, the journeyman killer. They deal sterner stuff. If they are paid they are well paid and they do the job thoroughly. They demand advance royalty which is used to "expense the job." The victim is decoyed, put on a spot from which there is a safe get-away; he is then and there "smoked off" in a very workmanlike manner, on the principle that the hire is worthy of the laborer and that good service makes a satisfied customer.

The gunman, no matter what his motive may be, doesn't rent a front room in a big hotel, get his man into it, take one pot-shot at him and then throw his smoking "money-maker" out the window into a crowded street. It might fall on the head of a passing policeman who would get peeved, block the exit and spoil the get-away. No, the killer always hangs on to his gun till he gets into a safety zone where he "cleans himself" by ditching it into a sewer, or giving it a "Brodie off the bridge." He then carefully washes the powder smudges from his hand, promotes himself another pistol and calls it a day—or a night.

Rothstein was not killed by any of the gamblers who held his repudiated I O U's. Cold-blooded, calculating poker players don't function that way. Why should they do away with this golden-egg goose who, if he wouldn't pay, might at least "sit in" with them again and take another trimming? It is impossible to picture that wolfish bunch of gamblers killing Rothstein, or hiring him killed, while they were holding his paper pledges for $100,000, with a chance of collecting at least some part of it. As I see it, it is much more probable that they would have taken out life insurance on him.

Then we come to the gentleman gambler, locked in jail, officially charged with this murder and clamoring for a speedy trial. The police, to whom he surrendered, appear to have everything against him necessary for a conviction—except evidence and a motive. Some way or other, he doesn't seem to qualify as the shooter. He is a big man, a burly man; not the gun-toting type. I question if he ever carried a gun in his life. He doesn't have to; he is big enough to shoulder people out of his way and to smack them down, which he probably does, if they don't like it. Big men are not gunmen. Gunmen and killers are almost invariably small men, physically unfit, and their careers of violence usually

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

begin on the playground where, as boys, they refuse to take a beating from the bully. They are undersized, and you can prove it by looking them over, from the frail, blond Billy the Kid down to Red Moran, the latest victim to "grease the griddle" at Sing Sing Prison. The big man waiting trial does not fit in the frame. Apparently he is not panicky or worried. So far, he has protected himself by telling the truth, and very little of that—an ideal client for a criminal lawyer. If he prefers to stay in jail and stand trial rather than name the guilty party, that's his business, and it's a safe play from the underworld's point of view.

Rothstein turned his face to the wall and died mute. He was not the type to protect another man who had treacherously pistoled him. The gangster plays at the game of death with nonchalance. His last words are, "If I live, I'll tend to it; if I die, the gang will." Rothstein was no gangster, no gunman. His was a soft and easy life and his code was not theirs. He knew he was dying; he had nothing to fear in the way of revenge, yet he named nobody. Why he didn't is an interesting question and it will be answered only if and when the police bring in the guilty one. Then they will get a confession. The shooting was obviously an impulsive, passionate act, and those who kill through sudden impulse and passion generally tell it all, in just that way.

On the whole it is a shabby affair. No class, character or distinction relieves it. The side lights, however, such as drug trafficking, fencing of stolen property, rum running, protecting and exploiting thieves, financing white slavers and operating sure-thing gambling joints are interesting and instructive. They certainly prove that an unscrupulous man with a million dollars can give justice many a kick in the belly, and make her like it.

The authorities are by the ears about it, papers prod the police for action. But what can the police do except wait for somebody to squawk? The shooting was so artless, so amateurish and unprofessional that it defies analysis by the murder sharps on the homicide squad, and they are reduced to guessing. And just for the sake of a little variety they can have my guess—*cherchez la skirt;* it's as good as the next man's. Broadway rears many hard-boiled Calypsoes, and more than one of them flitted across Rothstein's devious path. Again, his murder might have been the single robust gesture in the life of one of the many he-wrens that twitter about in Broadway's shadowy hinterland. After all, when the case is scraped clear of all the hokum smeared over it by ambitious reporters, it is as flat and stale as a four-card flush.

It is a relief to turn from this sordid affair and join one of the real aristocrats of the underworld on a midnight excursion. The recent $100,000 burglary of a Brooklyn residence in the small hours of the night got but a few lines in the papers, which was enough. Yet it seemed to me the big, outstanding crime of the past year, and for sheer professional execution it borders on the uncanny. The bars on the basement windows are removed, the house-dog's confidence is betrayed, the sleeping rooms are stealthily invaded while their occupants slumber; the family jewels and plate are taken and the visitor departs, leaving neither valuables nor clues behind him. There you have talent—miscast, but talent just the same. This job, apparently the work of a few hours, probably called for a month of the most intense application and concentration.

"How did he know we had any valuables?" the householder asks. Oh, he located them through an item on the society page, or saw them displayed in the theater or overheard a servant's remark. After that came the initial reconnaissance, patient days and nights of it. Then the careful diagnostic investigation to check up on dogs, children, old people, invalids, servants, watchmen, burglar alarms and, last but not least, the cop on the beat.

At last he gets down to the approach, which he decides is to be from the rear. He appears on "the spot" shortly after midnight, takes a critical look at the premises and goes lightly over the low wall. He has timed the policeman and knows he is on the other side of the block. After a moment's intense listening he attacks the bars at the basement window with a steel saw. They are soft, ornamental rather than useful, and his saw purrs through them as if they were mellow cheese. Next there is a delicate operation on a pane of glass, the catch is released and the window raised slowly, softly. Inside he sits down till his eyes focus to the gloom, then removes his overcoat and shoes and carefully negotiates the kitchen stairs.

Yes, here's the dog; a friendly little creature, lonesome in the big, dark house. Your burglar knows his dogs. He knows that from their long association with humans they have contracted many human weaknesses, so he wheedles himself into the dog's confidence and locks him, or her, in the pantry. The back door of the kitchen is now unlocked, to provide a hasty exit, if necessary; the overcoat and shoes are carefully placed on a chair near the door and the prowler feels his way, with feet and fingertips, into the dining-room. A ray from the street light filters in; it's enough to work by, and he puts in an hour digging out the silverware which is wrapped securely and left with the coat and shoes.

Nothing much to do now for a couple of hours, so he sits down in the kitchen and eats an apple, from the basket of fruit on the dining-room table. He wants to smoke but decides not to—there's too much at stake. Experience has taught him that leisurely city people sleep the soundest about four or five o'clock in the morning; that there is less noise from the street then, and little danger of anyone's coming in to interrupt him. Besides this, he knows it is safer to leave the house and walk down the street at 6 A. M. than at four. These considera-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions are responsible for his two hours of tense waiting.

By four-thirty he is on edge, sensitive as a razor blade. He puts in fifteen minutes making his way to the door of the downstairs sleeping room and finds it closed, but not locked. Another expert operation now—to open the door without clicking the lock or creaking the hinges. He takes a long time doing it and at last steps into the room. His hearing is good, but he opens his mouth to better it; his ear picks up the soft regular breathing of the two sleepers. While they sleep, they have no more control over their breathing than over their heartbeats. He knows all this and goes on to the bureau confidently, his sensitive fingers exploring the top of it and his ear alert for the danger signal, broken breathing. The baubles he is after are not on the bureau and he is forced to seek farther. After a heart-breaking ten minutes he gets the very balky top drawer open and—there it is: the $70,000 pearl necklace, in its costly case, and many other valuable trifles. Into his coat pocket they go.

His heart is pounding so from the suspense and exultation that he closes his mouth; he can hear the pounding; he's afraid it will wake the sleepers. Softly he goes out now, closing the door after him. Back in the dining-room he sits down, to cool off, and consider whether he should go upstairs to the other bedrooms. He decides against it; it is getting late, and he has the long end of the loot in his pocket, anyway. He leaves cat-like, as he came in, and after a careful survey of the street, pulls himself painfully over the wall and goes his way, gaunt, hollow-eyed, exhausted, like a spent runner.

To congratulate our burglar at this stage would be a little premature, for right here the police and other grief-agents enter the case. A pearl necklace of this value is pedigreed like a race horse and he can't "lay" it to a fence for a tithe of its worth. The fence must take great risk and insists on a big profit. There are two other courses open to the thief; he can break it up and sell it piece-meal or get a middle-man, or fixer, to "blow it back" to the owner who would give more for it than any receiver. He hesitates about taking it apart, for its great value lies in the perfect matching and grading of the pearls, and they are of little value, comparatively, when separated. He hesitates again, and begins feeling about for a fixer. This way of marketing his loot takes a lot of time and much careful, diplomatic maneuvering. Before things are well under way the burglar begins to realize that he has stolen a white elephant instead of a pearl necklace, and that he is a captive rather than a custodian.

Meanwhile the police are busy. The detective of fiction solves his problems by deduction and inference; the "dick" on the street solves his by deduction and *information*. In this case a little deducing convinced the police that the job was done by a veteran, skilled professional, and a few questions in the right quarter put them "on his tail" and he was promptly laid by the heels, locked up and stripped of his plunder.

The affair is a gem of purest ray any way you want to look at it. This burglar's professional skill was matched by that of the police; the banker has his trifles again and there's an empty cell at Sing Sing where our midnight friend will philosophically discharge those heavy obligations to society which his high rank imposes on him.

Here is a man who could save a burglary and robbery insurance company $100,000 a year if he were employed as a preventive agent. His talent is miscast, indeed, and when he is released he'll be lucky to get a job washing dishes at ten dollars a week.

JACK BLACK.

Washington Notes

IT IS all very well for Herbert to take the noble stand—as he did when in Washington—that he will not be President until March 4, and therefore, has no concern with anything that may or may not be done at the present session of Congress. Theoretically and as a matter of courtesy from the President-elect to the retiring President that is all right, but practically, it is ridiculous. Practically, this session is in his hands and actually all chance of its doing anything whatever was removed by his visit here. In the first place, he had to put a stop to the absurd Moses-Longworth-McNary effort to pass a farm-relief bill, and thus avoid an extra session, or at least, postpone it until September. And when he did that, he sounded the death knell of every pending proposition with the exception of the Fifteen-Cruiser bill, which will probably go through, despite the bumble-puppy nature of the Hale leadership, with a considerable margin of votes. At least, such is the present prospect. Of course, the calling of Congress together in April is hard luck for Herbert, but perfectly unavoidable, because of the campaign promise made under Borah insistence. At the time it seemed good politics, but in the light of the election returns, it now seems to have been entirely unnecessary. If he had told the farmers he was busy and not to bother him, they would still have voted for him.

What the early extra session means to Mr. Hoover is a tremendous lot of immediate work and worry, plus the loss of a valuable nine-months period in which he could assemble his administration, get his department heads settled without the pressure of politics and legislation, and prepare his program without rush or hurry. It was eminently desirable to have those nine months for these purposes, but there is no use talking about that—they have gone. Their loss imposes upon Mr. Hoover, who would have had enough to do for any ordinary man in picking his Cabinet and formulating his first message and inaugural address, the additional burden not only of framing a farm-relief bill of his own, but of intensive study of the tariff schedules—all before March 4. Considering these things, the popular notion promoted by the "am-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bassadors of the people," as some of its leading members refer to the "corps of correspondents," is not very well founded. Herbert will have a lot of work to do in Miami, and his clear-headed grasp of that fact is why he prolonged his stay in Washington. So far as he can, he wants to ward off from Miami people who will merely take up his time and whom he does not want to see. To this end, in the last few days here, he threw down the bars and made himself accessible to practically everybody. There was not a Senator or a Representative or a National Committeeman with a desire to see him who did not have his chance. Practically everybody who had a case to present had his opportunity to present it. Not a leader who should have been sent for was slighted. Some of the most dreadful of Washington's "boll weevils" got in, got a hearing and lost their excuse for going to Florida. Even the "ambassadors of the people" who should be seen, were. The net result is that there will be vastly less of a political rush to Belle Island than if the original Hoover schedule had been adhered to and the departure made on January 16. Some, of course, cannot be staved off, and others, of course, Herbert will want to see and will send for. But he has certainly done a lot to decimate the gathering army of favor seekers.

Meanwhile, you continue to hear an extraordinary number of things around here that are not so. For example, there is the extremely crude published report that if for any cause there should arise a vacancy as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court—and everybody who knows Mr. Taft hopes that will not occur for a long time—Mr. Coolidge would like to fill that position. I do not for a moment think Mr. Coolidge harbors any such remote dream, but if he does, I am quite certain it will not be realized under Mr. Herbert Hoover and for several fairly good reasons. It is unnecessary to mention more than two. One is the fact that Mr. Herbert Hoover has a very clear idea that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and also the Associate Justices should be lawyers. The other is, as I think I have pointed out before, that he is under no illusions whatever as to the feeble and perfunctory support given his candidacy for President by Mr. Coolidge. Nor is he any more confused as to the non-helpful part played by the good Calvin before the Kansas City convention.

Men who have as much of the Hoover confidence as anyone tell me that the Hoover talk about the "Coolidge policies" and "my distinguished predecessor in this high office" will be just as perfunctory as was the Coolidge support of Hoover in the campaign—which was the limit in that line; that Mr. Hoover feels under no sense of obligation whatever to his "distinguished predecessor." But because of the use he made of the Coolidge popularity in the campaign he naturally cannot and will not permit his real feeling on this subject to become plain.

Among other suggestions that have achieved some publicity about the Hoover Cabinet is the one that a Mr. James Wadsworth, who at some time or other was a Senator from New York, may be made Secretary of War. So far as I have been able to think, there are exactly two things to say about this idea. One is that James would love to have it, and the other is that James certainly will not get it. It does, however, give the chance to comment upon the devoted and unselfish friendship that exists among those four scintillating constellations of the New York Republican sky—Mills, Wadsworth, Donovan and T. Roosevelt, Jr. Their love one for the other is a touching and beautiful thing. Friends and brothers these boys are, all for one and one for all—at least so it seems to those who see them dimly and from a distance. The distressing fact, however, is that if Jimmie got a job half a point above that of constable in a country town, Ogden would age twenty years in a single day, while the sweet-natured Bill would curdle like cream in the sun and never smile again. On the other hand, if Bill landed in the Cabinet, despite the malevolent efforts of the Washington scuttlers of all sizes and sexes, Ogden and James would simultaneously be seized with kidney colic and need to be rushed in hot haste to the hospital, screaming with pain. And finally, justice prevailing, and his hidden genius at last recognized, should the dauntless young Teddy (friendly and trusting little fellow he is, too) now leaping from crag to crag in the Himalayas—should he be called home from the perilous pursuit of the giddy mountain goat and rewarded with a post of distinction upon which he could perch while the family worshiped—why then, arm in arm, Ogden and James and William would grimly climb to the top of the Washington Monument and dive off. Such is love—in politics.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Street Scene

Street Scene, by Elmer Rice. The Playhouse Theater. January 10, 1929.

IN A DRY SEASON, when so many theaters are closed and not a few managers have given up the game for the nonce and gone off to sunny beaches and Hollywood, Mr. Elmer Rice's "Street Scene" has come to many people as a treat, an excellent play, a worthy entertainment; and there is no need to throw any blight over the flower of their enthusiasm. In the realm of the blind, following the Spanish proverb, let the one-eyed be king; we may cheer "Street Scene" and wish it well.

In a setting by Mr. Jo Mielziner, cleverly realistic without being foolishly so and photographic without idle intrusions of dusty neighborhood detail from Ninth Avenue, where the play is laid, we see the story unwind itself entertainingly, with an amiable pace and plenty of time for the talk of the apartment house people as they go in and out, with engaging colors drawn from the contact of diverse nationalities, Jews, Germans, Irish, Italians and 100 percent Americans, and with a due complaisance and tidy willingness to please. There is a genuinely expert economy in the way in which the life of the Maurrant family is conveyed to us, and an economy of means that is even finer in the portrait of the wife's career, this doomed Anna Maurrant, whose husband is brutal and indifferent in his treatment of her, is given to drink, is full of principles

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and ideas of what a family should be and what his own has got to be, he'll see to that.

The inmates of the apartment house, then, go in and out, linger about the doorstep in the stifling summer heat, sit at their windows, gossip of their children and each other, of the little husband on the third floor who acts as if he were having the baby instead of his thin little wife, of the Hildebrand family whose head has disappeared and who are about to be dispossessed. And through the whole texture of conversation they weave the thread of this pale woman's tragedy on the second floor, the visits of the milk collector that they have all observed, the spreading scandal about Mrs. Maurrant. Idly and emptily they are doing her to death, but it is all a part of the day's chatter and the neighborhood news. We see Rose, her daughter, and the married suitor, who wants to take her from the job in his office and set her up in an apartment and a place on the stage; we see Maurrant himself, a member of the stage-hands' union, a drinker, sullen and bullying. Meanwhile, Mrs. Jones has something to say about everything, takes her husband, George, to task, and her dog, Queenie, to walk, and professes complete ease of mind about her children, one of whom is a hulking thug and the other almost a tart.

From that on, the play takes its course, clearly foreseen. The baby is born upstairs, Mrs. Maurrant tends the mother all night, she is even more brutally treated by her suspicious husband; he says he is going out of town with a show, her daughter is at the funeral of a member of the firm she works for, and Mrs. Maurrant asks the milk collector —cleverly portrayed by the author, as by no means attractive and so more indicative of the woman's despair—to come up to her rooms. The husband returns, kills the lover, and mortally wounds the wife, and after a long search is caught by the police. Rose, his daughter, refuses the attentions of the married suitor, and at the last does not accept the love of the Jewish student; she goes away for her own life, with her own ideas about one's dependence on something within oneself and reflections on the history of her father and mother in the light of that theory.

All this time, as a kind of matrix for the story, people have been passing, an ingenious assemblage of types and interests, curiosities of the town, vignettes of Manhattan, incidents of a day, and so on and so on, rendered with an amiable and accurate diversity that carries matters pleasantly along. And in the apartment house itself the well edited sayings of the different persons and races accompany this drab pageantry and sweet genre.

Mr. Rice's directing is good. Among the many players necessary for this *monde* of the West Side, Miss Mary Servoss, as the tragic central figure of the woman who is killed, gives a performance that is always convincing, and that, while she is on the stage, lifts the scenes to something like pathos and point. Miss Erin O'Brien Moore, as her daughter, Rose, has to surmount many platitudinous approaches to the character, and speeches that are without imagination or reality, but plays well; she presents a young image that our eyes easily believe in, and a sincere and simple rendering of the character, so far as is possible with the lines. She illustrates, however, one melancholy point that may as well be aired now as any other time, and this is in the matter of clothes. In play after play on Broadway, where there is a young creature whose muted life is in some factory, slum or dingy, tragic neighborhood, we see these young ladies whose roles are leading ones—the other players may be as mussy as you like and as photographic as the actor or the author chooses—walking about in their trim little frocks and perfect shoes, simple but smartly turned out, and, however modest, taking no chances at lessening the drawing power of their pretty looks. American girls, however poor, may have, if you like, a trick of looking smart, what with the sales and all, but there is a *chic* higher up and more costly that fools nobody with pretences of humility, and it is the pale cast of this thought that makes so absurd the picture of these leading young ladies in drab plays; and makes us ponder the problem of sincerity in art. Miss Beulah Bondi's Mrs. Jones is excellent playing.

So much for "Street Scene," then, which on one plane of consideration is pleasantly entertaining. On another plane, where you take the play seriously and where you ask yourself whether for an instant you have believed in any single bit of it, either as art, with its sting of surprise and creation, or as life, with its reality, "Street Scene" is only rubbish, or very close to rubbish. For me, who was not bored with it as an evening's theater, it is something less than rubbish, theatrical rubbish, in that curious, baffling way that the stage provides. The presence of living beings in the roles engages us, and gives a certain plausibility to whatever takes place, and a certain actuality to any character whatever. But is it possible that anyone who could understand the values of the first act of "Anna Christie," for example, or a play of Chekhov's, could fail to see that the last act in "Street Scene"—to take the most evident let-down—is empty and made up? The girl has found her mother shot, seen blood, at the hospital she has seen her mother die without speaking, she has seen her father caught and torn and bleeding, the Jewish boy, who loves her so much, offers to leave everything and go away with her, and she stands there making a little speech about dependence on one's self, and so on and so on, while nurses with perambulators have appeared and various persons come prowling around at the scene of a murder, and the obvious life goes on, amusing remarks from odd characters, and the rest of it—obliging journalism in sum. It must be a very elementary principle that the essential idea of a work of art goes through it, and that the themes and conceptions to be expressed must lie inherently in the substance of it, and that they are to be expressed in creation, not in superimposed sentiments.

Must we gloomily conclude that what most human beings like in the theater is a farrago of living matter with the sting taken out of it? If this Anna Maurrant's life and death really bit into us, cost us something, instead of providing a mere thrill and the comfort of pseudo-thought afterward, would we not wreck the stage for rage when we see how little this matter has stung the dramatist? One of the ways we know a work of art is by the cost of its unity in kind, in the same way that the soul within him, determining his form as he comes into the world, prevents a man's having the bulk, strength and peace of an elephant. One of the ways we can tell an artist is by the extent to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which reality puts the fear of God into him; a painter of no worth will paint you anything from Napoleon crossing the Alps to an old mill in Vermont, but a real painter trembles before the mere character of human hands and the problem of their conversion into the unity that is his style. Is it any wonder that Ingres, in his despair at the success of the second-rate, threatened to paint an Allegory of Mediocrities?

On a milder level of discourse, we may say that the acting in "Street Scene" furnishes a good instance of one of the problems in the art. For the most part the company at the Playhouse is made up of people who fit the characters ready-made. An Italian plays an Italian, a Jewess a Jewess, and so on, though the roster of names is mostly shining Anglo-Saxon—but that is nothing new in the theater. In the hurry and pressure of things there is little time to discover or train actors, perhaps, and perhaps the need for actuality in this particular piece led the casting toward these ready-made types. The result is that there is a good deal of entertainment in "Street Scene" that comes from watching these actual people as we might see them on Ninth Avenue, but very little interest in watching them as actors. They are mostly neither bad nor good. Their looks are better than their acting, and they seem better than what they say. As a minor by-product of the perplexity induced by such a situation, I have no idea whether the player written down as Mr. James M. Qualen, whose janitor, Olsen, seems to me the best performance of the evening, is only a Nordic of that ilk, chosen for his type, or a capital actor.

STARK YOUNG.

Magic, Black and White

HAITI remains more of an enigma, especially to the American intelligence, than most Latin-American lands. As a French colony it absorbed from its masters less European culture even than Martinique or Guadeloupe, because it was more brutally exploited and the servile revolution at the close of the eighteenth century was successful. France was never again to recapture Haiti for any length of time. The slaves imported from Africa were closer to the jungle at the time of their emancipation than those of any other West Indian colony. A hundred-odd years of "self-government" served merely to erase almost every trace of French influence except the language, which became for all but a few townspeople an obscure *patois*. Outside of the small mulatto minority in the towns who maintained contacts with Europe, the inhabitants lapsed naturally into ancestral habits of thought and feeling, from which neither religiously nor socially had they really emerged. The Haitian black is altogether different from the usual West Indian or the American Negro.

Into this strange and savage situation where Negro generals and presidents and emperors succeeded each other in an opera-bouffe rapidity was injected in 1915 the American Intervention, with the rigid hand of the Marine Corps, treaty officials, financial advisors and administrators, senatorial investigators, journalists, etc. It is needless to add that these new conquerors (as pacifiers) did not understand Haiti, did not speak either the official language of the colored *élite* or the obscure *patois* of the black majority, and for the most part had the contempt of the average American citizen for "inferior peoples," especially for "the nigger," and resolved to associate with his inferior as little as possible—above all to have his women kept from any contacts with "niggers." The result is that in a dozen brief years, while pacifying the country and performing many meritorious deeds such as making good roads, providing sanitation and medicine, collecting and administering taxes honestly (especially those to pay American bondholders) and enforcing marine corps standards of law and order and decency, thus unquestionably benefiting the vast majority of inhabitants, the new masters have needlessly antagonized the Haitian *élite* of the towns, who not unnaturally consider themselves the rightful rulers of the country and not socially or racially inferior to the whites.

The American benefactors, having given Haiti an economical and efficient government, a constabulary, a stable currency, a balanced budget, hospitals and clinics—all the good things of what is commonly considered to be civilization, everything but freedom and education, civil and political—now are unable to let go, being honestly convinced that their departure would mean another chaos, another swift lapse to Africa and the jungle, and another exploitation of the dumb millions of blacks by the very small mulatto minority of the towns, as heretofore. They hang on, contrary to agreement, and thus Haiti becomes one of the first perplexing problems to confront the new American President. Let us hope that his recent visit to Central and South America will enable him to solve it promptly and wisely.

The historical and political aspects of this enigmatic little African-American country, including the thorny subject of the Intervention, have been very fairly set forth by Mr. H. P. Davis in "Black Democracy," and now Mr. W. B. Seabrook, a journalist of the informal, breezy, intensive type, has done an equally useful work for Haiti, that is, for the American comprehension of Haitians. His "The Magic Island" (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company), is a jumble, much less coherent and poised than Mr. Davis' book, but in its defects even more revealing of the present situation than the more formal historical statement. For Haiti is a jumble even to itself and must remain so for the present. It has not found itself and is not likely to do so under the present regime. Speaking to a Haitian, Mr. Seabrook said with some swagger, "It so happens that I am really going to write truthfully about Haiti—not any partisan, political, propagandist, or 'devastating' truth, but just to describe your interesting people as they really are or as they seem to me,' etc. Before the end he is less self-confident of his ability to find the truth. Nevertheless he has succeeded in presenting many illuminating aspects of the bizarre kaleidoscope that is Haiti—racial prejudices, ignorances, contrasts. He tries to see all sides, but his sympathies are plainly with the Haitians, especially the primitive ones, and he has more than a doubt of the high benefit of an imposed "efficiency."

What interests Mr. Seabrook more than the scandals and gossip of Port-au-Prince, however, and what should interest many American readers, are the indigenous African folk elements in Haiti. Not being a trained anthropologist,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Seabrook may exaggerate and misapply some of the evidence he has found of disintegrating African cults. But at any rate he does not describe them from hearsay or exploit them for their horrors. His account of voodoo rites is probably the fullest and most accurate to be found in English. From the point of view of the tourist—and of the American Marine—voodoo is a ghoulish affair involving debauchery and human sacrifice, proof of Negro savagery and degeneracy, to be stamped out ruthlessly. It is the human-sacrifice element, much rumored although never circumstantially confirmed, that whets the obscene curiosity of the white in this little understood and wholly misinterpreted Negro ritual. Although Mr. Seabrook admits frankly that he never witnessed the blood sacrifice of a human being, he says with equal frankness that if he had stayed long enough and kept in touch with his Negro friends he probably would have had an opportunity. They occur rarely, are "performed only under stress of seeming dire necessity," *i. e.,* to propitiate the gods because of some disaster and—"That they never reach the courts or public notice is due to the fact that they are pure authentic voodoo, the sacrificial victim is never kidnapped, stolen or procured by other criminal means, but always offered voluntarily from within the religious group."

But voodoo is far more than human sacrifice to propitiate ancient deities: it is at least fragmentarily a religion, the remnants of African pantheism grafted strangely to Catholic symbols. To the modern observer the most significant aspect of voodoo is this mixture of paganism with a rudimentary Christianity—the use of symbols and formulas of the Church side by side with African names and rites. It is evident that the conversion of Indians and Negroes by the Catholic missionaries was most imperfectly accomplished throughout the New World. There are few priests in Haiti; a native Church has never been established; what more natural than that the Negro in his New World environment should have retained many of his inherited faiths in supernatural powers, confusing and uniting them with the new supernaturalism imperfectly acquired?

That the orgiastic elements of this crude pantheism, anthropologically interesting and important as they may be, are also either beautiful in themselves or cosmically significant to modern men, as Mr. Seabrook would have us believe, is another matter. His description of a sacrificial rite is romantic rather than either scientific or objective: "This goat had by now become inevitably personal to me . . . I recalled what had happened to the other creatures at the moment when they touched food, and I had an impulse to cry out to him, 'Don't do that, little goat! Don't touch it!' But it was a fleeting, purely sentimental impulse. Not for anything, no matter what would happen, could I have seriously wished to stop that ceremony. . . . Better a black *papaloi* [priest] in Haiti with blood-stained hands who believes in his living gods than a frock-coated minister on Fifth Avenue reducing Christ to a solar myth and rationalizing the Immaculate Conception. . . ."

The orgiastic, sexual and sacrificial, elements of primitive cults in survival are interesting, but their subjective importance to Mr. D. H. Lawrence or Mr. Seabrook is mere journalism. Yet it was this gusto for the theatrics of the rites, no doubt, which impelled Mr. Seabrook to search far and sympathetically for all traces of survival in Haiti of the primitive African religion. And it would be well if every American who has to deal with Haiti were to consult "The Magic Island" as a textbook, which might at least remove some of his superficial ignorance of its people. It would be well, also, if Americans at home were enlightened as to the sincerity and significance of what seems to their prejudiced eyes merely disgusting barbarities—came even to suspect that the crude African whom they feel called upon to discipline and exploit may have his own contributions to offer the world. It would be, however, too much to expect that Haiti, that tumbled corner of a tropical island, with its isolated valleys and towering mountains, should be left to its own strange devices, to cultivate its own deities and evolve its own civilization, desirable as that might seem to esthetes and intellectuals. That can't happen in a world such as ours seems fated to become. Nor is it likely that such a destiny would be a happy one for the three millions of blacks living in the island recesses. The town mulattoes would soon put them back into another slavery. But if ideal non-interference is impossible, at least we as self-constituted mentors and guardians can see to it that instead of ignorant officers of the Marine Corps, often with an inherited prejudice against the "nigger," we send them tolerant and sympathetic advisors, who do not classify humanity simply according to color. And finally, it would be well to make a start on the task of political self-education, long promised and never even begun, which is the goal we ambitiously set ourselves when we "went in" to "clean up" Haiti in 1915. Efficiency, morale (*à la* Marine Corps) are not enough, nor even sanitation, roads, and a constabulary. Something more may rightfully be expected of protectors of a backward people—if white magic is to compete successfully with black magic.

ROBERT HERRICK.

Solution

Oh, neatly round this white band
Will curl the eager sod,
It will press closer to the foot
Than ever this foot trod

At morning the lush river edge;
The root that tastes the eye
Will spin of it more luminous
A light than spins the sky.

The sounds to hear then will be sounds
Unidentified
In any book of day or night.
Only the pale side

Will burn to find writ there so late
What long it sought above:
Solution final to the dark
Geometry of love.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Unemployment and National Planning

SIR: As one who has long read your journal with pleasure and profit I take the liberty to comment upon the editorial on "Unemployment and National Planning," in your issue of December 5. It seems to me very much to the point and to show an understanding of the nature of the problem, as well as the practical administrative and financial difficulties. Such an understanding, unhappily, is revealed in scarcely any of the innumerable articles on the subject which have followed the New Orleans Conference of Governors. I wish that your editorial might be as widely read as the uninformed discussions.

Some readers, however, might gain a wrong impression even from your own excellent editorial. For the proposal which I made to the Governors' Conference, at the request of Mr. Hoover, was far more than the old so-called "Prosperity Reserve" idea; far more than the crude embodiment of that idea which is now before Congress in the Jones Bill.

Time did not permit me to develop the proposed policy in detail at the Governors' Conference; but I intended to cover all the phases which you have so convincingly expounded in your editorial, and others as well, when I stated explicitly at New Orleans that "the economic foundations of the proposed policy and certain specific ways of putting it into effect are set forth in 'The Road to Plenty,' by Foster and Catchings."

In that book, the shortcomings of the old "Prosperity Reserve" idea are discussed as fully as in your own editorial and in much the same way. So, also, "The Road to Plenty" expounds at length the impossibility of carrying out any such plan effectively, except on the basis of much more adequate, timely, and dependable indexes than are now available. In particular, the book calls for the very means of keeping track of unemployment which is advocated in your editorial, and shows that in this respect the Jones Bill is fundamentally defective.

You seem to me right in declaring that at times the proper way in which to finance increases of public construction designed to avoid unemployment would be from government borrowings rather than from taxation; that is to say, not from a "Reserve Fund" at all. At New Orleans I specifically pointed out that provision should be made from credit at appropriate times. You are right, furthermore, in implying that the proceeds of taxation would better serve our ends when used to retire government indebtedness during periods of prosperity.

But here again, you are fully in accord with the program as set forth in "The Road to Plenty." Allow me to quote freely a single passage from that book:

> Our proposed plan calls for a separate Federal Board, which shall itself gather and measure the data best adapted to show the adequacy of the flow of consumer income, using, however, for its own purpose, the wealth of data gathered by other agencies. Having thus collected the needed information, the Board shall advise the government how to use it as a guide in all fiscal matters. The Board itself, guided in the same way, shall determine when certain expenditures are to be made, which already have been provided for by Congress, *under a policy of long-range planning of public works*. Thus the Board, both through its own acts and its published reason for its acts, will provide private business with the needed leadership.
>
> The next point concerns the volume of money in circulation. If the indexes ever show the need of a reënforced consumer demand, which cannot be met without additional government expenditures, the Board must have the power to bring about such expenditures out of funds previously accumulated for the purpose, or out of loans which involve an expansion of bank credit. This feature of the plan is essential; because government expenditures can do little to meet the needs, if all the money which the government spends in a given period is collected as taxes in the same period.
>
> It follows that the government should borrow to enable the Board to carry out its purpose whenever, in the judgment of the Board, the needed flow of money to consumers will not come from other sources. At most times, perhaps at all times, the needed expansion of money actually will come from other sources, because private industry will be stimulated, under our policy, to make capital expenditures. And that is the chief way that consumers do obtain the needed flow of money when times are good. Still, we can never be sure whether the flow of income from this source will be too large or too small. The whole project is so very important that the government should stand ready to borrow money if needed for the purpose.

I will not ask you to read further quotations. These are enough, possibly, to show what I meant when I said that the policy I proposed at New Orleans (frankly stated as being based on "The Road to Plenty") is very much more than the "Prosperity Reserve" idea, which in your editorial you properly derided as an old and inadequate proposal.

RALPH O. BREWSTER.

Augusta, Me.

Humanist and Modernist

SIR: In this most recent phase of the battle of ancients and moderns, one of the outstanding features is the naïvely condescending attitude which the modernists assume toward their opponents, the humanists. This attitude is very much in evidence in the review by Allen Tate in the New Republic (December 12, 1928) of Paul Elmer More's "The Demon of the Absolute." Such condescension is all the more amusing because it is accompanied by an utter lack of understanding of the humanistic point of view as represented by Mr. More and Professor Babbitt. In the course of Mr. Tate's review I can find but few phrases which even touch upon the truth; the rest is, I say quite deliberately, a piece of unmitigated misinterpretation.

To take one example of the many instances where this misunderstanding is displayed, we may cite Mr. Tate's reproaches of Mr. More as being a "mechanistic" critic: "For he is, with respect to literature, an eighteenth-century mechanist: his version of literature unmistakably resembles the mechanical version of nature." This is, indeed, a peculiar interpretation of Mr. More's view. The latter adapts from Coleridge four criteria which great literature satisfies: it discerns truth by an imitation of nature; it gives pleasure to the reader because of his recognition of this truth and closeness to nature; it possesses permanence in its capacity for being read again and again with pleasure; and it appeals to the higher faculties of the mind. There is no mechanism here, but rather an imaginative reading of literature to the end that deep insight into the nature of man be attained. Further, it is difficult to see how Mr. Tate can accuse Mr. More of mechanism in the face of such a statement as that on page 24: "If you should ask me by what rhetorical devices or by what instrument one poem or one work of art appeals more successfully than another to the higher faculty within us . . . I would reply frankly that the solution of this problem of the imagination may be beyond my powers of critical analysis."

Mr. Tate has made the common critical error of confusing the true classic point of view with the neo-classic. These two attitudes have at least this in common, that they require a discipline of taste and effort derived in some way from literary tradition, and modernists revolt at discipline and tradition wherever found. For instance, there is a lack of accuracy and rigor in thinking manifested by Mr. Tate when he remarks in a gratuitous aside that "Plato has no exact terms." This is precisely to miss the point of the Socratic method, whose essence is definition and the drawing of distinctions in meaning. There is evidence throughout Mr. Tate's review that he has not understood the Socratic method or that he has been unwilling to apply it. Otherwise he would have noted as between the work of Dante and James Joyce a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more significant difference than merely "a different ordering which the perceptions, the emotions, the ideas receive."

Mr. Tate does not understand his age, for he is completely steeped in it. If he would see his time in its true character, he must take himself out of it by the roots and attempt to view it from the vantage point of a human being who is of all the ages, surviving intact the periodic maladies of humanity.

LOUIS HARAP.

Cambridge, Mass.

The Injunction in Wisconsin

SIR: Since the publication of my article, "The Injunction Comes to Wisconsin," which appeared in the New Republic of January 23, further important developments have occurred in connection with the case involving the men's clothing workers in Milwaukee.

In his final disposition of the case Judge Gehrz has modified the picketing provision in his injunction. In place of the former permission to picket in numbers, pickets are now restricted to one at each entrance and exit to the Adler Company's shops. Two factors influenced him in this rather drastic change. One is his belief that at picketing headquarters plans were made by certain union members to throw yellow paint on the homes of a few "scabs." Another factor influencing the judge is his conviction that the eight months which have elapsed since the controversy began is a sufficiently long test of strength. Possibly implied in this is the hope that a reduction in picketing may pave the way for a resumption of relations between the company and the union, for the experience of the eight months has demonstrated conclusively that the company cannot obtain anything approaching an adequate number of suitable employees who will work on an open-shop basis.

But, of course, the new picketing arrangement is objectionable to the Amalgamated. The union's position is that for eight months picketing in numbers was maintained in an entirely peaceful manner and that there were no new developments which would warrant such a drastic change. It is true that the Amalgamated's own shop and other unionized concerns in Milwaukee have absorbed most of the locked-out Adler workers, and that therefore in this particular instance the number of pickets is not a vital matter. But the union doubtless does not look upon the situation in Milwaukee as isolated and without bearing on the struggle to establish and maintain collective bargaining elsewhere. Actions such as those of Judge Gehrz have a way of being regarded as precedents in other jurisdictions, which, in their turn, may include areas where the union's position is much less favorable than it is in Milwaukee. In such areas the number of pickets permitted is likely to be a major factor in determining success or failure.

At the same time that Judge Gehrz modified his picketing order, he definitely held the Adler Company liable for the wages which its former employees lost from the time the lockout began until the contract with the Amalgamated expired. To enable him properly to assess the amount due, estimated at from $50,000 to $75,000, he ordered the company to bring its books into court. The company has appealed from this part of the decision to the State Supreme Court.

LYLE W. COOPER.

Milwaukee, Wis.

An Arithmetical Error

SIR: As I sold out my modest holdings in the Consolidated Gas Company of New York before the recent appreciation in the market value of the stock, I feel as unfriendly to this gigantic utility as the New Republic itself. But before joining with the New Republic in its appeal to the Public Service Commission and Governor-elect Roosevelt I should like to call your attention to a rather appreciable arithmetical error you have committed in your issue of November 28. You state, in your editorial on page 27, that there was a reduction in electric rates of $4,500,000 a year after the merger between Consolidated Gas and Brooklyn Edison. But, by reason of an increase of dividends, equivalent to a dollar a share on old Consolidated Gas stock and three dollars a share on Brooklyn Edison stock, there was a "net gain" to the stockholders of $31,320,000 per year, or seven times as great a gain as that enjoyed by the consumers.

As a matter of fact the figure $31,320,000 per year represents the total dividends now received by the owners of the new Consolidated Gas common stock ($3 per share on 10,440,000 shares), and not the increase in dividends since the merger. Before the merger the common stockholders of Consolidated Gas received $21,600,000 a year, or five dollars per share on 4,320,000 shares, while the common stockholders of Brooklyn Edison were paid $7,200,000 a year, or eight dollars per share on 900,000 shares, making a total amount received in dividends before the merger of $28,800,000 a year. As the stockholders of Brooklyn Edison received 900,000 shares of 5 percent preferred stock in addition to 1,800,000 shares of new Consolidated Gas common in exchange for their 900,000 shares of Brooklyn Edison, $4,500,000 a year must be added to the dividends on the common stock. This brings the dividends now paid to the former common stockholders of the two corporations to a total of $35,820,000 a year, or a net gain since the merger of $7,020,000, rather than $31,320,000 a year as you state. You are right in saying that the stockholders have gained more in dividends than the consumers have benefited in reduction of rates; but the actual ratio is one and a half to one rather than your figure of seven to one.

ROTH CLAUSING.

Rochester, N. Y.

Russian Education

SIR: The following despatch in the London Times of November 17, 1928, may usefully be read in connection with Professor Dewey's interesting articles on Soviet Russia:

> Izvestia, the organ of the Soviet government, has published the official estimates for the next financial year for elementary, middle and higher schools, and a comparison of past and present estimates, adding the comment that in spite of all efforts education remains below the pre-revolutionary level. The newspaper writes: "It is necessary to say definitely that the figures do not yet reflect any educational revolution. No decided step has been taken to remove a series of the most crying anomalies in educational work. All standards on the educational 'front' remain behind, and considerably behind, pre-revolutionary standards."

HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG.

New York City.

A Seminar in Mexico

SIR: May I use your columns to draw the attention of your readers to the "Seminar in Mexico," the fourth annual session of which will be held in Mexico City, July 13-August 3, 1929?

This Seminar is under the auspices of the Committee on Cultural Relations with Latin America, of which John Dewey is Honorary Chairman; Henry Goddard Leach is Chairman; Catharine Waugh McCulloch and John A. Lapp are Vice-Chairmen; and Walter Frank is Treasurer. This committee seeks to further mutual understanding and appreciation between the peoples of the Americas.

The program of the Seminar will include general lectures on the life of Mexico to be given by leaders in the political, business and cultural life of the country; round-table discussions specializing upon various phases of Mexico; lectures upon the historical and archeological backgrounds of Mexico; trips to near-by cities and towns. Ample time will be allowed for rest and recreation.

The membership of the Seminar is limited to those whose business or professional connections equip them to contribute to the discussions and enable them to reach a large audience upon their return.

Applications for membership should be sent to me at 307 East Seventeenth Street, New York City.

HUBERT C. HERRING.

New York City.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dostoyevsky Abroad

The Diary of Dostoyevsky's Wife. New York: The Macmillan Company. 421 pages. $7.

THIS IS the journal of Dostoyevsky's second wife during the spring and summer of 1867, when Dostoyevsky had been forced to leave Russia to escape from his own and his brother's creditors. From this account, it would appear that the Dostoyevskys spent most of their time in Germany quarreling with waiters over tips, quarreling and making up with each other, and pawning their belongings to pay the bills, when Dostoyevsky had lost his money gambling. Anna Grigoryevna is simple and touching; Dostoyevsky's own complicated character here appears to its worst advantage: he is selfish, disagreeable and silly. It was the range of Dostoyevsky's intelligence and the brilliance of his conversation which made people forgive him these qualities. When, for example, we read Baron Wrangel's account of his talks with Dostoyevsky in Siberia, or the description of him by Sonia Kovalevsky, the woman mathematician, with whose sister Dostoyevsky was in love, we have a vision of a quite different person. Anna Grigoryevna, who notes precisely how much everything costs—though she frequently speaks in this diary of long conversations with her husband—reports scarcely a single one of his opinions. Yet from Dostoyevsky's letters written at this time, we know that he was already preoccupied with the ideas with which he was afterwards so profoundly to impress himself on Russian thought.

Perhaps the nearest that Mme. Dostoyevsky comes to touching on these ideas is in her record of the already famous quarrel between Dostoyevsky and Turgenev. Here is her account of the visit paid by Dostoyevsky to Turgenev at Baden-Baden:

> According to him, he is very embittered, even to the point of being venomous and talks the whole time about his new novel, which Fyodor never even so much as mentioned. Turgenev is furious over the notices in the papers, saying he has been most fearfully cut up in "Golos" as well as "Vaterlandischen Nachrichten," as well as other publications. He also said that the Russian aristocracy, at the instigation of Philip (?) Tolstoy, had done their best to exclude him from their society, but that none the less nothing had come of it. He added, moreover: "If you only knew how delighted I should have been!" Fyodor, as usual, treated him none too gently, telling him to procure himself a telescope, for as he always lived in Paris he couldn't otherwise expect to know what was happening in Russia, let alone understand it. Turgenev declared he was a realist, and Fyodor said he only thought he was. When Fyodor declared he found the Germans extremely stupid and very apt to be dishonest, Turgenev promptly took offense, assuring Fyodor he had irreparably insulted him, for he himself had now become, not a Russian any more, but a German. Fyodor said that he hadn't known that, and greatly deplored the fact. Fyodor said that for the most part he had spoken in a facetious tone of voice which had obviously annoyed Turgenev considerably, and that he had quite openly told him that his novel had met with no success. But on the whole they parted friends, and Turgenev promised to give him the book. Of all the curious men—how could he possibly be proud of being a German instead of a Russian? I should have thought no Russian writer on earth should want to repudiate his country and least of all declare himself a German! What, when all's said and done, has he got to be grateful to Germany for, seeing that he has grown up in Russia, which has supported him and done its very utmost to encourage his talent. And now he breaks right away from it, and declares that if Russia were to go under, the world would not be the loser! Of all the appalling things for a Russian to say! Enough of the whole matter—but I know that this conversation with Turgenev has excited Fyodor beyond words, and that he always gets beside himself when people repudiate their fatherland.

It is clear from the first part of this account that Turgenev had special reasons for being particularly irritable; and it is equally true that Dostoyevsky had special reasons for resenting Turgenev: he had borrowed fifty thalers from Turgenev two years before, and had never paid them back. Yet there was something more important and interesting than appears from Mme. Dostoyevsky's description at the bottom of the quarrel between these two writers, who were contemporaries in age and who had had, as young men in St. Petersburg, their first success at the same time. Dostoyevsky belonged, like Turgenev, to the Russian educated class; but his imprisonment in Siberia had modified his point of view profoundly. The Russian governing classes spoke French, and they looked habitually toward Western Europe for culture and ideas; they regarded Russians as barbarians, and could not sometimes, according to Dostoyevsky, even write their own language correctly. Their liberal aspirations, when they had them, were derived from Republican France. Dostoyevsky had had himself this sort of education and he had shared these ideas. He had belonged to a political and literary club composed of Russian intellectuals of this type, and as a member of this club, he had been convicted of conspiracy against the Tsar and sent for four years to prison. He found there that, as an educated Russian, he was regarded by the ordinary Russians with hatred and suspicion. It seemed to him that the gulf between the educated classes and the people was so deep as to make it impossible for even the artists, for even the reformers themselves, to contribute anything really valuable to the development of the national life. Russian novelists wrote about Russia, as he himself in his early fiction had done, from a Western European point of view, from a point of view derived from novelists who had been dealing with societies quite different; and Russian reformers behaved as if an enlightened bourgeoisie, such as had made possible the French Revolution, were to be expected in Russia. Neither knew Russian life at first hand; both were unfitted by education to understand it; and both inhabited worlds of illusion. Contemptuous or despairing of the antiquated social system and the semi-savage population from which they had themselves sprung, they had removed, either actually or spiritually, to the other end of Europe; and, even when sympathetic and intelligent, had persistently succeeded in evading the realities of the national life. Dostoyevsky's correspondence, during this period of his own enforced exile, is full of hunger for Russia: he devours Russian newspapers; he complains again and again that a novelist cannot create in exile. For him, Turgenev was a gifted Russian who had run away from Russia, who had too easily assumed the hopelessness of a world which he had feared to face, and who complacently patronized the fellow countrymen whom he had made his reputation by writing about.

When we read Dostoyevsky on this problem of the Russian expatriates, we become aware that most of what he says applies equally to Americans in Europe—we feel

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the dilemma and the psychology of the artist or intellectual, cut off from the provincial and incompletely civilized country, has never—not even by Brooks in "The Pilgrimage of Henry James"—been studied more profoundly than by Dostoyevsky at this period. There is, in many important respects, a striking analogy between the situation of Russia in relation to Western Europe and the situation of the United States; and it is of peculiar interest to Americans to see how Dostoyevsky deals with it.

What Dostoyevsky proposed was that the educated Russians should clear their minds, as far as possible, of preconceived ideas from abroad, and, from a first-hand realistic examination of the Russians and their institutions, try to understand the Russian character and the Russian point of view. Now the conditions of Russian life are, and were, very different from our own; but they resemble our own in this, that both are fundamentally different from the conditions of Western Europe. Like the Russians of Dostoyevsky's day, we have always looked to Europe for ideas; and the ideas with which we have been supplied have, as in Dostoyevsky's Russia, been imperfectly suited to our needs. This has always been the problem in America: simultaneously to adapt European culture to the alien conditions of American life, and to cultivate from our own peculiar and un-European resources an original culture of our own. And since the War, the situation has, in some respects, become more serious. Since the War, we have been importing from Europe the emotions and the points of view appropriate to bankruptcy and exhaustion—resignation, futility and despair—to a country full of money and health. And Europe seems herself to look to us, as she has never done before: the very books which she sends us denouncing us seem to suggest that she has been disappointed. Yet what America sends Europe, in her famine, are principally scientific researches uninspired by creative theory and works of art, often illiterate and usually second-hand, imitated from European models. The principal idea, so far as one can see, with which America has presented Europe during the period since the War has been Watson's Behaviorism—the invention of a psychologist who is certainly not a great philosopher, and who has since, as a matter of fact, gone into the advertising business.

If, however, we pursue the conclusions to which Dostoyevsky's position led him, we become aware of a further analogy between the Russian situation and our own. When Dostoyevsky had set his face away from Western Europe and toward Russian ideas and institutions, he found himself confronted by the Tsardom, the feudal land system and the Greek Orthodox Church; and there is something at once disquieting and heroic in the spectacle of one of the most intelligent men of his time making the effort to swallow all these. And so an American who would turn for sustenance and support to contemporary American institutions faces a similar appalling prospect: he sees the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, the American political machine, all apparently the organs and instruments of the nationwide commercial solidarity which harasses us with spies and informers, sometimes dragoons us with Cossacks, which persecutes without justice or mercy Sacco and Vanzetti, and how many others! and whom it suffices for an Al Smith to speak out merely with a moderate common sense and a by no means unhampered frankness to strike with panic and fire with resentment.

Yet Dostoyevsky's instinct was sound: the fact that the American problem seems a particularly formidable one is no excuse for fleeing or evading it. We must, of course, take European ways of thinking along with our language, our alphabet. But we must attempt to think from the realities of our peculiar American life, so new, and so different perhaps from anything that has ever been known, that, if we cannot find out for ourselves what we want and where we are going, it is improbable, in the present situation, that anybody else can tell us. Of all this, more presently.

EDMUND WILSON.

Picasso and Others

Modern French Painters, by Maurice Raynal. Translated by Ralph Roeder. New York: Brentano's. 275 pages. $7.50.

FOR THOSE who are trying to see eye to eye with the artists of today, for those who realize that there has been no decline of the great force called contemporary art, this book is thoroughly deserving of attention. Few will agree completely with the author's choice of illustrations and the account of the time indicated by them: just in proportion to one's interest in the subject, there will seem to be errors of omission and inclusion, and even, as in the case of Derain, it may seem that M. Raynal's tempered admiration for an artist has led him to select examples unsatisfactory to one of a warmer appreciation. These are minor aspects of the question offered by the book. Beginning with men under fifty years of age (only Friesz, among the artists discussed, and one or two of the "popular school" are over fifty), it carries us along to very young painters, indeed; such men as Matisse, Rouault, Bonnard, already count as of another generation. Considering the difficulties of selecting among the immense mass of artists in Paris today, the choice is really a better one than it may appear, and we are enabled to form a fairly accurate conception of the course of modern art.

The adequate work of the translator permits us to follow the author's analysis of his problem. As a man who knew Picasso from that extraordinary painter's earliest years in Paris, and as the author of the most important book on the still young master, M. Raynal sees Cubism as almost another term for the "Idealism" which he takes as the heading of one of his introductory chapters. He distrusts the men who have tried to move on to a new type of naturalism, in which he senses submission either to the demands of the market-place or to the dictates of "museum art"—by which words he seems to imply a form of painting conforming to the mere externals of the old masters. M. Raynal treats as a paradox Picasso's own assertion that his works in the Cubistic and more realistic styles are "one and the same phase of painting." His reply to this claim has the interest of representing authentically a period that cannot fail to count as one of the most important in the history of art. Against the narrower definition of "idealism" which the author gives, there speaks the later effort of the painters—and the works of the best of them are eloquent of the fact that they have gone only forward; M. Raynal himself fully refutes the charges of any retrogression on the part of the men he most admires.

The larger part of the text is composed of critical biographies of the fifty artists treated; for each there is bibliographical material and, whenever possible, the author has obtained written or oral statements of their philosophy. Although not a few of them show that their real expression must be looked for from their work in paint, instead

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of from its explanation in words, such first-hand testimony is clearly of the utmost importance. I append some extracts from it:

> Juan Gris: "My method is the method of all time, the method employed by the Masters; it is a matter of principles, and principles are constant."
>
> Fernand Léger: "Nowadays a picture must bear comparison with any manufactured object. Only a picture which is an object can sustain that comparison and challenge time."
>
> Maurice de Vlaminck: "I never set foot inside a museum. . . . I don't ask my neighbor how he loves his wife to learn how to love mine."

The articles on Derain, Braque, Gromaire, Lhote, and Metzinger are also to be recommended particularly.

WALTER PACH.

The Unbelievable Bennetts

The James Gordon Bennetts, by Don C. Seitz. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 397 pages. $5.

THE nineteenth century in America was an age of newspaper giants. Journalism, in that restless period of its growth, seemed to have a magic lure for men of merit and audacity. It is astonishing to find within the limits of a single profession such conspicuously robust and picturesque figures as Horace Greeley, the two Bennetts, Charles A. Dana, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst—all of whom flourished or came to maturity during the eighteen hundreds.

Here is rich ore for the biographer's mining. Not only were these men dynamic personalities, but they lived in the very thick of their times, were related to all the major activities of their day by the most intimate of bonds. And yet, oddly enough, biography has dealt with them rather poorly. It has tended to dwell upon their personal eccentricities, their fiery battles, their half-legendary exploits, and has failed to paint with any vigor the background against which they moved, or even to estimate critically their place in newspaper history.

In his latest volume Mr. Seitz has a practically foolproof subject, and, like a good journalist, he has squeezed every drop of color out of it. His tale of the two Bennetts is a racy, zestful affair. In particular, he draws a lively portrait of James Gordon Bennett the Elder, who, as an impoverished newspaper hack of forty, founded The New York Herald in 1835 on a slender capital of five hundred dollars and proceeded to outrage New York society by ignoring its taboos and by appealing directly to the masses. Bennett was an innovator, a man of few principles but much courage, a rather engaging braggart. Opposed and hated throughout his life, abused (and even horse-whipped in the streets) for his vulgarity and sensationalism, he nevertheless revolutionized old methods of news-gathering, and created a newspaper more powerful and popular than any which America had known.

With the younger James Gordon Bennett Mr. Seitz is far less successful. The second proprietor of the Herald was, it is true, an exceedingly complex character. He shared the elder Bennett's initiative and daring, his unrivalled sense for news, but he was also erratic, unstable, and tyrannical, a sybarite and a social climber. Mr. Seitz tells all the famous anecdotes about him, from the Wild Animal Hoax to his drunken pranks in Paris, and describes in detail his more serious achievements such as the despatching of Stanley to Africa, but no clear-cut image of the younger Bennett emerges from this welter of facts. One feels that Mr. Seitz has not penetrated beneath the skin. He hurries, moreover, over the last years of the Herald and does not explain satisfactorily the causes of its final decline.

Did the elder Bennett sow the seeds of Yellow Journalism which have blossomed so virulently in the tabloids? Was the influence of the Bennetts destructive, or was it not? These are questions which still arouse argument and which, unfortunately, Mr. Seitz does not attempt to answer. His is an entertaining but superficial biography. He gives a very meager account of the times in which the Bennetts lived, and he pays scant attention to the other newspapers which were developing simultaneously with the Herald. He makes few comparisons, few judgments—even as to the ethics of the Bennetts' methods. He could have written a rich, informative biography which would have thrown light on both the past and the future of newspaper history, but he has succeeded only in constructing a swift, readable tale.

EDITH H. WALTON.

The Front Sinister

Spies, by Joseph Gollomb. New York: The Macmillan Company. 389 pages. $2.50.

Spy and Counterspy—The Development of Modern Espionage, by Richard Wilmer Rowan. New York: The Viking Press. 315 pages. $3.50.

THESE are not just two more war books. As such they might be disregarded, since the American's notions of the vast mechanical horror of modern warfare are already as deterrent as literature and the movies are like to make them. His notions of spying, however, still cluster round the lone hand cunningly played through against tremendous odds till the noose or firing squad bestows deathless fame. Now, the spy may be what one of these authors calls him, "the only ancient weapon still in use," but both show him modernized beyond casual recognition.

As a people, we are genuinely if clumsily committing ourselves to disarmament and permanent peace. Well, peace hath her spies no less than war. Mr. Rowan early demonstrates that "there is no truce on the sinister front." When Armistice Day ended the War, it also began—long before Versailles and no doubt in preparation for that assembly—a secret-service free-for-all among yesterday's loyal allies; and as late as 1928 four months could disclose seventeen convictions for espionage in five European nations. Now, spy mortality, contrary to the popular impression fostered by all governments, is not high: even in wartime the author estimates it at a little more than 2 percent, as against a little less than 19 percent for combatants. Where seventeen are punished in peacetime, how many go free as too insignificant or too difficult to punish? How many more go undetected? Alongside the more or less legitimate intelligence routine of the consular and diplomatic services—that stream of peaceful penetration which can be made more inimical than outright invasion—runs this not inconsiderable feeder canal of special intelligence, "generally recognized as both natural and illegitimate." The peace-promoting American had better recognize its existence. For if you cannot have war without spies, it is at least worth consideration whether you can have spies without war.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Consider, for instance, the Redl affair. When Zubowitz, Russian military attaché in Vienna and therefore in the legitimate channel of "accredited" espionage, bought from Redl, an officer high enough in the Austrian secret service to be attached to the general staff, military secrets of the first importance, the deal placed both in the illegitimate parallel canal—where they were discovered. Since court-martial must mean exposure of so flagrant a violation of diplomatic privilege and probably war with an enemy thus advised of the Austrian preparations, Zubowitz was merely sent across the frontier and Redl's enforced suicide postponed hostilities for a year and a half of re-preparation—until Sarajevo. Only the millennialist dare assume that when history repeats herself in Europe she will ignore America.

But Redl, you will say, whatever his contribution to the disputed causes of the War, was more traitor than spy, and treason is unpredictable, almost unavoidable. Napoleon replies, "The spy is a natural traitor." The fact is, of course, that to the military mind treason is all but universally predictable, and its avoidance at home and procurement abroad is a prime charge upon every secret service. Lacking a traitor, however, Russia would necessarily have sought the same information through spies. Not treason, but the intelligence system that procures treason, is the soil of war.

Even so, argue the experts, what actually causes wars is bad intelligence. And it may be true that Austria overbore Servia because she was deceived as to Russian preparedness. Yet it is also true that Germany, with the most thorough intelligence service on record, misled herself as to probable Belgian resistance and British unity. If bad espionage causes war, and the best available espionage is powerless to prevent it, the world might well try abandoning espionage altogether. Suppose there had been no Zubowitzes, no Redls in pre-war Europe?

As well suppose that there were no liquor in the United States! You cannot prohibit treason and espionage: they are already prohibited. And how is their prohibition to be enforced upon states convinced that peacetime espionage is insurance against war or an economical substitute for it? The French credit Mata-Hari with sixteen transports and supply ships, a generous life-work for a battleship whose cost and upkeep would run to a hundred million dollars: Mata-Hari drew a hundred thousand marks and the coöperation of a few U-boats. Small wonder that at Washington the French were ready to scrap capital ships but held out for submarines! Of course, spies come even cheaper in peacetime, when they travel more safely, communicate more easily and face the loss of a few years instead of their heads.

A Russian officer of my acquaintance was once sent on an errand to the Rumanian front. Arriving after dark, he sought first the house from which issued the loudest sounds of revelry by night, and here the staff itself welcomed him with food, drink and the gratitude due an ally in a time of need. "But how is it," he inquired, "that I, a stranger, could find my way to your headquarters without once being challenged?" One of his hosts struck an attitude. "Sir," he said, "we are Rumanian officers and gentlemen: we do not need sentries." Doubtless they died like officers and gentlemen in the ensuing *débâcle*. But it is not the business of soldiers to die unnecessarily. Accordingly, if you have an army, your army must have the protective eyesight of sentinels, scouts, spies and counter-spies. Even in peace you must keep the secret eyes open, if only to make certain your neighbor's eyes are where they belong. Like your own, they won't be.

So that the problem of espionage, along with every other problem concerning peace, reduces itself to the question of disarmament. As matters stand, the reduction is to absurdity: "disarmament itself promotes espionage." How else can you assure yourself that your neighbors are not breaking faith? When the League propounded its anti-war boycott against aggressor nations, one old hand remarked, "Always the more work for the spies!"

Now, here is a vicious circle deserving all the attention it has signally lacked, in America at least, during a decade in which the pursuit of peace has been, at long last, the world's chief concern: that spies must police the peace; that where spies are there may be war; that while there may be war there must be armies; that even idle armies must have active spies; and, finally, that armies cannot securely be dismissed without retention of the spies who may yet compel their reassembling.

All these issues are raised in Mr. Rowan's introductory paragraphs, and if he does not emphasize their circular pattern, that is doubtless because his task is expository rather than hortatory. He then sets forth the whole duty of spies with as much detail as its coy nature permits, and concludes with a rather haphazard hundred pages of specific careers. His style, somewhat academic but suave and quizzical, suits well his investigative, skeptical temper.

Where Mr. Rowan spies on espionage, Mr. Gollomb spies on the spies themselves. With intent to entertain he reports a score or more of the "aces of espionage," inventing dialogue and trimming exposition to the bone. And entertain he does, if with something of the breathless rush and staccato emphasis of scandal. At high speed his pen squeals and runs thin; at low, it tends to deliver purple blotches. Nevertheless, I should recommend his pages as an appendix of case records for Mr. Rowan's text, if he were only a little less credulous, a little farther from the mood of the Sunday horror section. Even after he has debunked the autobiography of Mata-Hari, that tarnished lily is still too gilded to display beside Mr. Rowan's sturdy bloom. His book will serve better as a popular introduction.

CLARENCE BRITTEN.

The Jew as He Is Not

Moses, by Louis Untermeyer. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

My First Two Thousand Years, by George Sylvester Viereck and Paul Eldridge. New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.50.

THE MOST amazing thing about these two books, and the only thing they have in common, is the fact that neither of them portrays the Jew as he really is. The Wandering Jew of the Viereck-Eldridge saga is anything but Jewish in his psychology. He is romantic where a Jew would be sentimental; sentimental where a Jew would be bitter; diabolical where a Jew would be supercilious. And Mr. Untermeyer's Moses lumbers where he should scintillate; he is vindictive where we would expect to find him merely contemptuous; he is humble where we expect him to be domineering.

Certainly it is manifest that Mr. Untermeyer has added nothing to the Biblical narrative save the widely-bandied and pointless intimation that Moses was the son of an Egyptian princess, and the equally pointless suggestion

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATRES

Theatre Guild Productions

Wings Over Europe

Martin Beck Thea., 45th St., W. of 8th Ave.
EVES, 8:50. MATS. THURS. & SAT., 2:40

CAPRICE

GUILD THEATRE, West 52nd Street Evenings, 8:50
Matinees, Thursday and Saturday, 2:40

Strange Interlude

JOHN GOLDEN THEATRE, 58th St., East of Broadway
EVENINGS ONLY at 5:30

"HOLIDAY"

"Mr. Hopkins's 'Holiday' at the Plymouth is a class hit, a real hit."—Ward Morehouse, *The Sun.*
ARTHUR HOPKINS presents PHILIP BARRY'S ultra-successful comedy. Settings by ROBERT EDMOND JONES.
PLYMOUTH Thea., W. 45th St. Evs. 8:50
Mats. Thurs. & Sat., 2:35

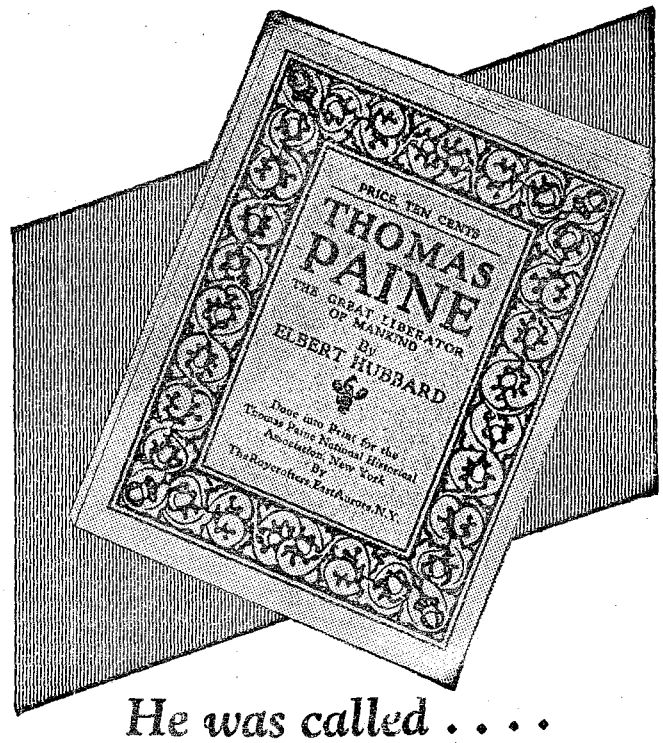
RUTH DRAPER

in her original character sketches
Evenings 8:50, and Matinees, Thurs. and Sat. 2:50
COMEDY Theatre, 41st St., East of B'way.
Management ACTOR MANAGERS

PLAYHOUSE 48th St., East of Broadway. Evenings 8:30. Mats., Wednesday and Saturday.
ELMER RICE'S NEW PLAY
STREET SCENE
"Made of the simplest human ingredients, it is strikingly original, amusing, moving, exciting."—*Robert Littell, Post.*
Settings by JO. MIELZINER. Presented by W. A. BRADY, Ltd.

New Playwrights Theatre Production
SINGING JAILBIRDS
by Upton Sinclair
directed by Em Jo Basshe
Now at the GROVE STREET THEATRE
22 Grove Street Spring 2772
Sheridan Sq. Sta., 7th Ave. Subway.
Five minutes from Broadway *Popular Sub. prices*
"'Singing Jailbirds' may revolt you, it may enrage you, almost certainly it will bring you near tears. But it will never for a moment leave you without interest; you cannot miss having thrills run up and down your spine as you hear men singing the 'wobbly' songs.—N. Y. Sun.

YIDDISH ART THEATRE
14th St., East of Union Square Telephone Stuyvesant 0523
MAURICE SCHWARTZ, Director
Every Friday Evening and Saturday and Sunday
Matinee and Evening
"GOD, MAN and DEVIL"
A new version of Jacob Gordin's Masterpiece
Settings by Mordecai Gorelik
English Synopsis Supplied


PRICE TEN CENTS
THOMAS PAINE
THE GREAT LIBERATOR OF MANKIND
By
ELBERT HUBBARD
Done and Printed for the Thomas Paine National Historical Association, New York
By The Roycrofters, East Aurora, N.Y.

He was called . . . .

"A Filthy Little Atheist"

NOTHING could be further from the truth. He was so earnest a believer that he founded a new church in atheistical France, and wrote one of his greatest books to save that nation from losing its faith in God!

He was so deeply religious that his ideas have brought about one reform after another in Christianity as we know it! And they are still at work like a leaven that will eventually influence the whole lump!

Incidentally, he was neither "little" nor "filthy." He stood several inches taller than the man who called him "filthy little atheist," and his contemporaries testified to the extreme neatness of his person and the simple elegance of his attire.

For Thomas Paine, our present-day Thomas A. Edison has had a life-long admiration. Lincoln worshipped him. Jefferson, Monroe, Madison, Hamilton and Washington were all devoted to him. He was the master-mind of the American Revolution, and later of the French Revolution and a long-drawn-out upheaval in England.

Do You Know the Truth about Thomas Paine?

Why have you never been told about him? Because he has enemies still! Every bigot, every bureaucrat is his enemy! They live in terror lest people, reading Paine, become enlightened about their exploitation of ignorance and superstition.

You have been kept "in the dark" about Paine, but now you can read the true story of his amazing life, brilliantly written by Elbert Hubbard.

Send 10 Cents

for your copy of this handsome little brochure immediately, before the edition is exhausted.
Enclose this coupon.

Thomas Paine National Historical Association,
Dept. 841A, 59 West 47th Street, New York City.

Please send me the story of Thomas Paine by Elbert Hubbard. I am enclosing 10c for this fascinating little Roycroft Book.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....*State*.....

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the religion he promulgated was a synthesis of existing Hebrew beliefs with the doctrines of the monotheistic Pharaoh Ikhnaton. The reader wades on and on through laborious, meaningless, undramatic documentation; he finds the character of Moses forbidding, inhuman, unheroic, and unconvincing; he is aware of omissions and unsatisfactory explanations, and is even ready to condone them if they only serve some artistic or historical purpose. But no such purpose is revealed between the covers of this book; and the reader can only shrug his shoulders, say "What of it?" and pass on.

Luckily he can pass on to "My First Two Thousand Years," a far more human and interesting book, that offers him five hundred pages of swift, scintillating, unmitigated diversion. It is picaresque, colorful, ribald; witty, romantic, moving. Above all, it is thoroughly saturated with the modern spirit. That the hero is anything but a Jew does not matter. He is a universal figure, a seeker who conquers his aversion to both Christianity and Judaism, and finds spiritual solace in Spinoza, intellectual gratification in modern science and business, and emotional emancipation—this is only hinted—in a perfect union with the universalized Salome.

The twenty centuries of wandering that lead to this ultimate self-realization are full of glamorous and diverting escapades. While the treatment is frankly journalistic, there is an undercurrent of poetic verity that frequently lends an epic quality to the variegated patchwork. To keep such a huge and miscellaneous canvas perpetually interesting is in itself no small achievement. To give it point at every turn and an essential unity throughout must commend the respect of every reader. And the daring conclusion, coming when we least expect an additional point to be made, and piously offering a psychoanalytical explanation of the actuality of the Wandering Jew, is so thoroughly fantastic and preposterous, and yet so utterly in character, that it becomes a worthy colophon for an absorbing book.

WALTER F. KOHN.

Red Dusk in Ireland

The Assassin, by Liam O'Flaherty. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

MELODRAMA, in one of its several forms, may represent an effort to take a short-cut to reality not often permitted the commonplace. For the novelist it may be an equivalent of the scientific method of sometimes determining general truths through the study of unusual phenomena; and, as in Liam O'Flaherty's new novel, enormity of action and strangeness of *milieu* may be finally responsible for the attainment of a perfect reality. Under exaggerated conditions, human beings are, of course, inclined to act in an exaggerated way, but at the same time the deep and perennial traits of their humanity are forced into a rare and illuminating relief. Features often obscured in the life-size cannot easily evade the scrutiny demanded of the heroic. To press forward hidden potentialities of character, to lend strong relief to characteristics so common as to pass unobserved, these are part of the function of melodrama as developed for serious literary use by O'Flaherty in his latest work.

In its barest terms, the story follows the classic model of the exile who returns to his native land to murder the ruling tyrant. But, contrary to the classic treatment, emphasis is shifted from the merely physical obstacles to be overcome to the various psychological states of the protagonist. The ecstasy of purpose by which he is at first sustained, the tension of mind immediately before and after his great moment, the ultimate disillusionment of success are all presented with a sureness of psychological power to which we are unaccustomed outside the ranks of translated fiction. Michael McDara is one of the new Irishmen, that is to say, one of those whose danger lies in their immense capacity for belief being denied release by the prevalent loss of all beliefs. His allegiance belongs no longer to any one religion, or to any one country or social program, but to a personally conceived ideal of abstract justice. This Irish assassin, who like the heroes of Dostoyevsky has passed beyond the knowledge of good or evil, does not plot for the future of his fellow men, but seeks in crime the justification of his own intellect. The superiority of his stand is shown by contrast with his two accomplices, one of them a hired thug, for whom assassination is as much a habit as a profession, and the other a sentimental conspirator of the old school. The last meeting of these three in a dingy room in the Dublin slums, with its clash of opposed temperaments, its interchange of motives, its atmosphere of broken nerves and torn loyalties, affords the finest chapter in the book and one of the finest in contemporary fiction.

The hard, clean, staccato style that O'Flaherty has mastered is here miraculously suited to the subject. It is a style that loses none of its richness by economy, none of its beauty by swiftness. O'Flaherty has also once again shown his virtuosic command of physical description. His portraits of people seem almost detachable, etched not in moonlight, but in the sharper and rather more ruthless light of common day. Perhaps to this last habit, with its consequent disadvantage to the charm that has come to be expected of every truly Irish writer, may be laid in part the unreasonably limited reputation that O'Flaherty still enjoys in America.

WILLIAM TROY.

Contributors

ROBERT STEWART is Dean of the College of Agriculture in the University of Nevada. He has contributed several papers on agriculture to the New Republic.

MORRIS FISHBEIN is editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association and of Hygeia, the Health Magazine.

RAYMOND HOLDEN has contributed reviews and special articles to the New Republic and to other periodicals. He is the author of a volume of verse, "Granite and Alabaster."

JACK BLACK was for many years a burglar, operating successfully in many American cities. He has done time in a number of prisons in America and Canada. His book, "You Can't Win" (Macmillan, New York), telling the story of his life, was published in 1926 and attracted wide attention.

ROBERT HERRICK, formerly professor of English at the University of Chicago, is the author of "One Woman's Life," "Together," "Chimes," and several other novels.

HAROLD LEWIS COOK is an American writer at present living in France.

WALTER PACH is the author of the recently published "Ananias."

EDITH H. WALTON is on the staff of the Forum.

CLARENCE BRITTEN was formerly an editor of the Dial and one of the contributors to the symposium, "Civilization in the United States."

WALTER F. KOHN is a young Chicago writer who has contributed verse and criticism to numerous periodicals.

WILLIAM TROY is an instructor at New York University.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED